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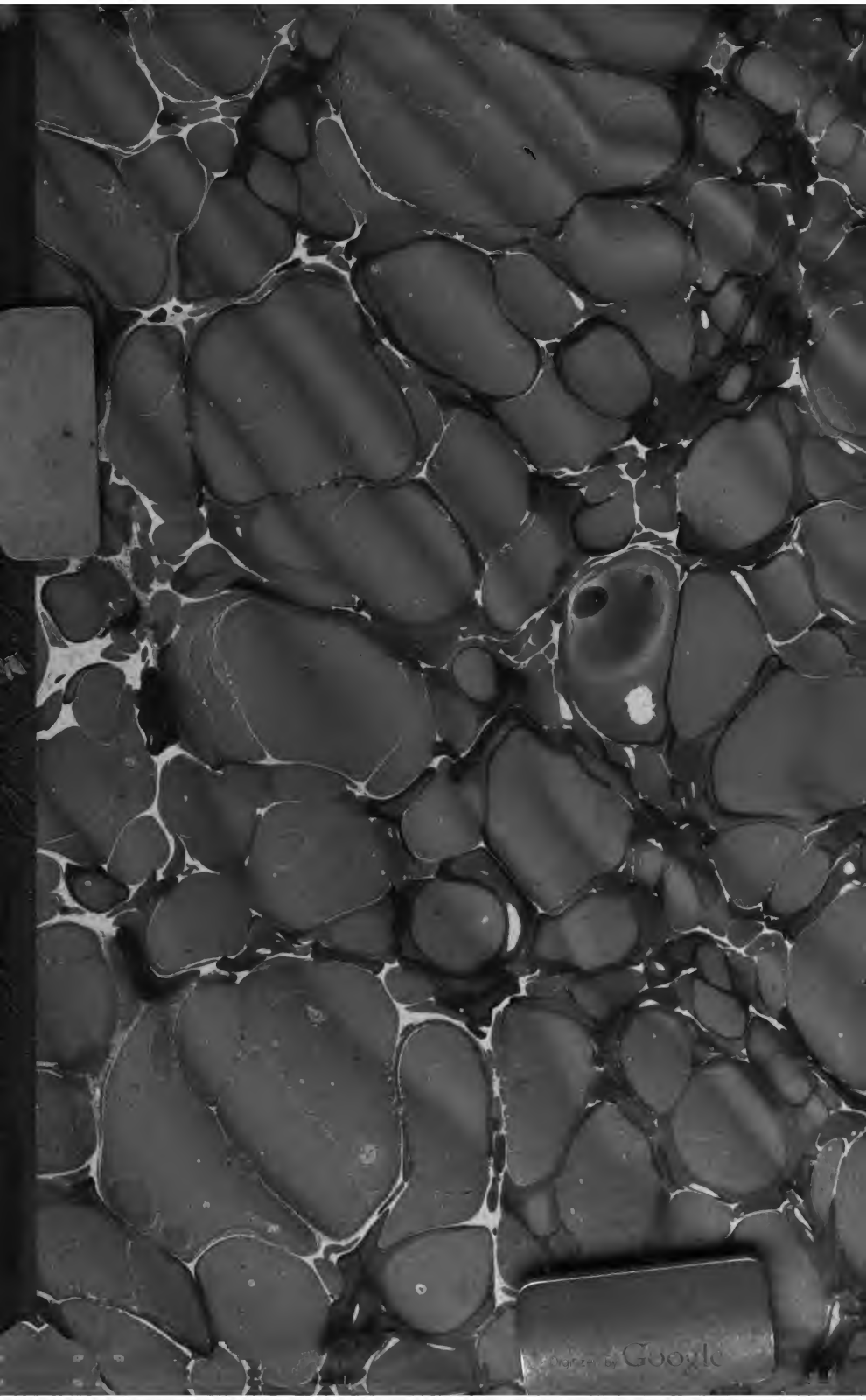
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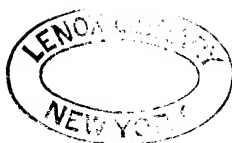
THE
FULNESS OF TIME.

BY THE
REV. W. MAXWELL HETHERINGTON, M. A.

**"BUT WHEN THE FULNESS OF TIME WAS COME, GOD SENT
FORTH HIS SON." GAL. IV. 4.**

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MDCCCXXXIV.



TO HIM
WHO TO A LOFTY GENIUS ADDS
EVERY PURE AND MANLY VIRTUE,
TEMPERING ALL
BY THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUE RELIGION,
A BRIGHT EXAMPLE
OF THAT EXALTED CHARACTER
A Christian Statesman;
LET HIS COUNTRYMEN, LET THE WORLD,
ANNOUNCE HIS NAME :
THIS VOLUME
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

SOME years ago, during the course of his studies, it occurred to the Author of the following volume, that a book might be written on some such plan as to render it equally valuable to the student of general history, of politics, and of theology,—being persuaded that one master-principle might be pointed out by which they were all governed. Repeatedly did the same idea recur to his mind; and each time with increased force and definiteness of aspect, exciting in him a growing desire that some person would make the attempt. Still he neither thought of undertaking it himself; nor even had any very accurate conception of what ought to be its leading principle and general plan. Occasionally he glanced at the subject in conversation with intelligent friends, some of whom may still remember having been thus led to think of it, and having been favourably impressed with the suggestion. But still it remained among the unseen possibilities of that ideal world, the future, with very little prospect of being realized.

At length peculiar circumstances placed the Author in a situation where he had much leisure and very little society. This not only gave facility to his engaging in mental occupation, but rendered it absolutely necessary to prevent those irksome feelings which solitude is too apt to engender in a mind of rather an active temperament. This necessity was rendered the more urgent by the pressure of severe affliction; under which it was a mere act of self-preservation to grapple with some subject of countervailing power. In this condition his mind reverted to the idea by which it had

been formerly engaged ; and as the soul naturally betakes itself to religious truths in its hour of trial, he was led by this combined influence to the formation of the view which he has attempted to elucidate. He then resolved to prosecute the subject, whatever might be his inability to do it justice ; the presence, and even the toil, of an engrossing pursuit having become absolutely indispensable to his mental well-being.

Such is a simple statement of the manner in which the general conception of this work formed itself within the mind of its Author ; and of the circumstances which impelled him to attempt its written development. Into minute particulars he does not deem it necessary to enter ; but thus much he thought it expedient to state, were it only to show, that a presumptuous confidence in his own abilities formed no part of the reasons which induced him to venture on an undertaking of such vastness in its range, and of a character so formidable in its dread and solemn importance. No one can be more sensible than himself how inadequately it has been accomplished ; yet the preceding statement may serve to show, that it was not lightly undertaken, however defective the execution. And when it is remembered, that labour itself was one material object which the Author had in view, credit may, perhaps, be given him, for having made more extensive and laborious researches, than the first aspect of his work might seem to indicate. This consideration may serve to appease those who might have censured the work as loose and superficial, because not abounding with references to authorities,—indispensable, no doubt, in exact history, but by no means so requisite in productions like the present.

The work might, doubtless, have been greatly improved. by having been longer retained, and subjected to repeated and careful revision ; but, as the Author is

about to return to scenes of more active exertion, he could not promise himself that degree of leisure and abstraction from other duties, which would have been required for such a process. He, therefore, thinks it best to give it to the public as it is; well aware that its errors and deficiencies will soon be detected by learned and intelligent criticism, satisfied that they ought to be so, and willing to change wheresoever he may be convinced that change would be amendment. If but a few derive from the perusal even a portion of the advantage which he has enjoyed from the composition, he will be deeply gratified; and if his feeble efforts may be instrumental in removing doubts and difficulties from the minds of any, by pointing out the graciousness, wisdom, and mercy in the arrangements of Providence preparatory to that important crisis, "The Fulness of Time," the amplest wish of the Author will be accomplished,—and to the Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer of man be the glory.

BLOUNT'S COURT, HENLEY ON THAMES,
February, 1834.

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INTRODUCTION.

HISTORY has been defined to be, "philosophy teaching by examples;" may it not also be, "religion displayed by events?" If there may be the philosophy of history, may there not also be the theology of history? Man is not more a political, than a moral, and a religious being. It is the part of a political philosopher, while he reads the records of his race, to strive with skilful eye to detect each latent principle of the human mind in its aggregate condition, as it evolves into plastic agency, giving character insensibly to nation or epoch; and from such extensive observation to treasure up the stores of political science, both theoretical and practical. He, on the other hand, who peruses the same records with the eye of a Christian philosopher, regarding man chiefly as a moral and religious being, will make it his main object to mark the growth and progress of our moral constitution in ages past, as empires and dynasties of different characters arose and fell, each drawing forth into active and powerful existence some previously undiscovered, uncultured, or weak capability of our common nature, and leaving behind it the heritage of its own indestructible impression; and from all he will learn to read the handwriting of God in this world's history. Each is

an important course of study; and both may be so conducted as to be mutually illustrative. Nay, if rightly conducted they must be so; and will be found to proceed, if not in parallel, at least in cognate lines; or rather to have points of convergence *in* which they meet, at one great epoch, and *from* which they advance in their progress towards another. Now the most important epoch, since the creation of the world, was undoubtedly the coming of Christ. If, therefore, the principle just stated be correct, the leading characteristics of human nature, political, mental, and moral, will be found to have all advanced with kindred bias and contemporaneous progress towards that epoch, as a central point of convergence, there to deposit the result of past ages, and thence to proceed with fresh energy and altered bearing on their new career. This general idea is susceptible of many specific applications. The elucidation of one of these,—one by no means of secondary importance,—is the object to which the following pages are intended to be devoted.

It has been frequently asked, both by the infidel caviller, and the candid enquirer, Why this great event was delayed so long?—or, What peculiar suitableness was there in the period when it did occur, to render it, in the language of the Apostle, “The fulness of time?” Many brief and cursory notices have been taken of such questions, but we are not aware that any express and sufficiently comprehensive answer has ever

been given ; yet it is certainly susceptible of one both ample and satisfactory. Such an answer would indeed require to be a work of not a little research into the records of antiquity ; which, however, it would abundantly compensate. By a considerably extensive and minute survey of the political, mental, and moral history of the world from the deluge till the Christian era, it might be shown, that the precise epoch of our Saviour's coming was not the result of any capricious or arbitrary determination, so to speak, of Sovereign Will ; but took place according to the arrangement of infinite wisdom and mercy, at the very point of time the best calculated for accomplishing the great purpose for which it was ordained ; and that no period either before or since could have answered equally well. The subject is one of deep interest, alike to the statesman, the philosopher, and the Christian,—to every man who loves to trace the political, mental, and moral or religious progress of mankind ; and if rightly executed must tend to vindicate the gracious dealings of the all-wise God, with his rational and intelligent, though sinful creature, man.

Before entering into the details which the course of our investigations will necessarily bring before us, it may be expedient briefly to state the leading views and chief topics, to the elucidation and expansion of which, our endeavours shall be mainly directed.

Ignorance is proverbially blind ; and the va-

rious gradations of short-sightedness but serve to mark its glimmering degrees. But the extent of vision must also be the limit of comprehension ; for what we see only in part we can understand only in part. To this it is owing, that men are so liable to form mistaken notions, even of individual events, but more especially of those, the full evolvment of which occupies a large space in the onward course and widening expanse of ages. Indeed we never can rightly estimate any event if we attempt to consider it altogether apart from what went before and what follows it. There is not probably in the universe any such thing as an isolated event. All things are connected with all things ; and to an intelligence able at one broad glance to scan the universe it would appear, that every being which exists, and every event which occurs, is more or less remotely connected with every other, each receiving some modification from that which preceded and those which surround it, and imparting in its turn a corresponding bias and reciprocal tinge of its own character to them ; all receiving and communicating the constantly increasing tide of blended influences, till the whole of created nature seems knit together by one electric chain, the living and interpenetrating thrill of which is imparted and directed expressly by the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the universe Himself. Not only are all things thus connected with each other, so that none can be wholly isolated ; but there is a constant progress

in events, so that the character and effects of no one can terminate in itself. As every event owes some portion of its nature to that which preceded it, so it imparts some of its own to that which follows it, and thus propagates the blended good or evil of itself and its predecessors. One single impulse may thus live along the whole line of continuous being, like a propagated curse or blessing, till at some mighty crisis in the course of nature the good or the evil produces its full effects, and with changed character and new destinies the race of life speeds on. To estimate aright, therefore, the nature of any event, we must endeavour to ascertain what it derived from that which went before it,—what it communicated to those around it,—what bias it gave to that which directly followed it,—and what share it had in contributing to the character or hastening the approach of that crisis in which it was developed or destroyed. In like manner it is impossible accurately to understand any crisis in all its bearings and importance, without having previously made ourselves as fully acquainted as possible with the nature of at least the leading events of whose combined influence it was the issue. Thus, with regard to the “Fulness of time,” viewed as a point of convergence, we can form no right conception of the events which preceded it, unless we consider them not only in what they were themselves, but also, in what they had received from preceding, in what they imparted to succeeding,

events, and in their general bearing with reference to that great epoch. Neither can we rightly comprehend the whole nature of that important epoch itself, without taking a previous survey of those leading streams of human life, thought, and action, by whose united confluence its fulness was produced. To accomplish this in such measure as the author's limited powers and acquirements may enable him, is the object of the following disquisition.

The plan to be adopted, and the reason of adopting it will both be rendered very obvious by an illustration founded on an analogy, certainly not new, but sufficiently applicable. The whole human race and the history of the world, may be very aptly compared to an individual and the history of his life ; just as the nature of a homogeneous mass may be perfectly ascertained by analyzing any minute fragment containing in similar proportions all its constituent elements. Now the actions of a man at any period of his life will be modified in some degree by the combined influence of all that has gone before it ; because his character will give its impress to every action, and that character has been gradually developing itself since earliest infancy, under the influence of circumstances and in the peculiar situations in which he is placed, or to which he has attained, or after which he is still aiming. If therefore we would estimate his character and actions aright, we must go back to the earliest period in which we can perceive the

dawn of intelligence,—though even then we shall be short of the source,—and endeavour to weigh and appreciate the force and nature of all the various events, feelings, and thoughts which have mingled in the complex structure of his progressive existence. The more comprehensively and accurately that this has been done, the more correct will be the opinion formed respecting the nature of any event or action in the man's life, and the effect likely to be produced by it on his general character and his subsequent conduct. Nor is this observation less applicable to man considered in the aggregate. The world, like an individual, had its infancy, passed through successive stages of growth, attained maturity, when all its powers were fully developed, and seemed then to experience a general stagnation of all those powers, as if predictive of, and preparatory to, its approaching dissolution. Hence it follows, that to judge accurately respecting the nature of any event in general history, more especially of any such important event as may be considered an epoch, or point of convergence, we must trace its whole progress, mark the bearing and influence of each successive stage of development, and observe in what manner they all tend to produce and characterize that crisis of accumulated maturity. Besides, as has been already observed, all things are so connected with all things as to exercise upon each other a perpetually reciprocating influence. Every step, therefore, in the world's progress

must receive the collected character of all previous stages, add to them its own, and transmit the whole, with a new modification to its successor. How great is the light thrown upon the wisdom of the whole plan, and how much is the importance of any great era, or central point of convergence, manifested by tracing this steadily accumulating, and yet incessantly modifying process.

In one aspect more the analogy deserves especial consideration. The God of creation is also the God of Providence. In the exercise of infinite wisdom and mercy He made man what he is, and placed him where he is, and appointed all the circumstances of his lot, so as best to accomplish His own gracious purposes respecting the workmanship of His hands. The whole life of man, being a period of probation, intended to qualify him for a higher state of existence, is a system of moral culture, arranged by Omniscient Wisdom in such a manner, that every circumstance around us, every event during its progress, from the cradle to the grave, all bear upon our future welfare, by either calling into action some good quality, which might otherwise have lain dormant, or repressing some evil passion or tendency, which might have exerted a baneful influence over us, had it been allowed to reach maturity. But, as before, what is true of the individual, is equally true of the aggregate. The whole human race is passing through a similar probation. As all the qualities of the smallest

circle are precisely the same with those of the largest, with the simple difference of greater or less expanded proportions ; so the probative process through which one man passes, and that through which the world is passing, strikingly resemble, if they are not the exact counterparts of each other. True, men die, after their brief pilgrimage of three-score years and ten, while man collectively appears immortal. Yet let not the world boast itself too confidently. Its period of probation, also, has been appointed by the same All-wise, and Sovereign Ruler. One great circle of events has already completed its revolution ; another has for some time been speeding on its career, and when it, too, shall have evolved into full maturity, its innate, and perhaps still latent capacities, the voice of the mighty angel shall proclaim with dread solemnity, that "time shall be no longer." The course of futurity we cannot foresee ; but we may read the scroll of the past, and there trace in the annals of the world the process by which all things were prepared, under the guidance of Omniscient Providence, and how by the gradual evolvement of leading principles, and the pressure of controlling events, all bearing onward and converging in one point of central attraction, the "fulness of time" was accomplished, one course of dispensations and discipline closed, a new principle infused, and the new system of moral culture begun, the completion of which shall be the commencement of eternity.

The principle, in short, to be farther developed in the following work is this. As we fully believe that God brings every man through that kind of discipline best suited to his constitutional peculiarities, and to the production of those results which it is His pleasure to have produced; so we hold, that the world itself has been brought through a similar course of moral and intellectual culture, preparatory to the coming of Him, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil and bring in everlasting righteousness. To establish this view it will be necessary to prove, that the process of culture through which the world was brought, was expressly adapted to draw forth into full maturity the various powers of the general mind, as they naturally arise in the progress of civilization; that all these leading powers actually were thus excited in natural succession; and that, while if the Christian era had come earlier it would have intercepted their development, if it had been longer delayed man would have sunk into such a state of degeneracy, and even imbecility, as to have materially frustrated the gracious purpose of God, in sending forth his Son to fulfil the law and save the sinner.

Before quitting the statement of general views there are a few more to which it may be expedient still to advert. The character of an early stage of society is necessarily one of comparative ignorance and simplicity. The tendency, and even the power to form general

ideas and act upon general principles, are characteristic of an advanced state in civilization. Savages act all on detail, and have consequently an acute perception of things in detail far superior to civilized men ; but they are almost wholly incapable of comprehending general principles. The same remark is equally applicable to the tendency of the human mind in its individual growth. Youth is acute in detailed perceptions ; maturity and experience acquire general ideas ; and philosophy attains general principles. The complicated interests, and enlarged views, and superior intelligence of high civilization are no more possible in an early stage of society, therefore, than the wisdom of full grown manhood in the period of early infancy. Yet the infancy of the world, like that of an individual, would be fully occupied in the culture of those peculiar faculties, physical, mental, and moral, which characteristically belong to such a period. These being completely matured, a farther development would take place in the common mind, of those more enlarged capacities suited to its advanced position ; and thus would the whole physical, intellectual, and moral capacities of the collective being, man, be called into action and cultivated up to their utmost extent, while new objects and events as they successively arose, acted upon the pre-existing mass, and as if by a certain magnetic influence, excited new energies, formed new constitutions, and hastened the maturity of all human nature's va-

rious endowments. Now, as it is our intention to trace the progress of society from the earliest stages of which we have any authentic records, it will be necessary to investigate the origin of civil polity, and the effects produced by its earliest form upon the mind of man. The connection between civil polity and general morality, their mutual dependence, and their reciprocal action upon each other must also be discussed. It will probably be found that they maintain a very intimate connection, and advance in parallel lines and with almost equal speed; that they become stationary or retrogressive from the same causes and nearly simultaneously; and that the degeneracy of the one will either be accompanied, or very speedily followed, by that of the other. It will farther be found, that there is a deeper and more powerful principle in the human mind than those from which civil polity and common morality spring, capable of controlling both; the principle, namely, of religion, or that which impels men to believe in the existence of a God, and to render Him due worship. The influence of this mighty principle will be found to be altogether supreme in promoting the good or the evil of man, according as it may itself be pure or corrupt. To trace the reciprocating influence of these three great principles upon each other, and upon the common mind, during the development of its powers in the several stages of its progress; and to mark how the various leading

events of general history were so arranged as to nourish each and all in their natural process of growth, and to the full amount of their inherent abilities, will engage no small part of our attention. We shall thus be led along the path by which the whole human race has travelled towards that mighty confluence of destinies, “the fulness of time ;” and by the aid of the leading ideas, already stated, may be enabled to unravel the complicated structure of human society till we arrive at a few intelligible master-principles, and to comprehend some portion of that infinite and gracious Wisdom which pre-determines, arranges, pervades, and governs all things in such a manner, as at once to be productive of the greatest good to His creatures, and to furnish the greatest display of His own most glorious and merciful attributes.

It may be equally necessary, also, though greatly less agreeable, to mark the melancholy counterpart,—to view the contrast to society’s progress in good shown in its declension into evil. It will be found, that though man has a natural tendency to religious worship of some kind, yet he has a natural hostility to true religion. This will be seen to manifest itself in all the multiform aspects of idolatry and superstition which have prevailed among various nations, and under cover of which indulgence has been given to every corrupt and vicious inclination by which human nature is polluted. The effect of false religion in producing impure and immoral con-

duct will be deplorably apparent ; and from the same tainted fountain it will be found, that contamination is imparted to the general tone of society in all its departments, productive of individual, national, and political degradation. These deplorable consequences will not be found to be retarded by the advancement of society in arts, superficial refinements, and what is called taste ; as all these are perfectly compatible with that licentious dissipation and that heartless selfishness which are characteristic of moral degeneracy. Even a state of high intellectual cultivation will be found ineffectual in counteracting the baneful tendencies of moral corruption ; while, bereft of the controlling and ennobling spirit of pure religious piety, it will waste its acute energies in vain and trifling sophistry, or in efforts of a still more malignant and pernicious nature. If, then, the course of our researches shall enable us to show, that this double process held on its way with equal front, at once cultivating the various powers of man, in all possible relations, and up to their highest pitch ; and at the same time by an incessant course of demoralization and degeneracy, proving the utter impossibility of any physical, intellectual, or moral culture to rescue man from the corruption and misery of his fallen condition, without the infusion of an entirely new principle ;—if this can be made clearly to appear, then the period in which the whole converging lines of the multiform process met in

mature completion, may well indeed be termed "the fulness of time"; and the express fitness of the position it occupies in the world's history, both to the nature of man and to the course of events, will tend to supply another vindication and illustration of the wise and merciful providence of Him "who seeth the end from the beginning," "who doeth according to His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth" and who causeth "all things to work together for good to those who love Him, and are the called according to His purpose."

There is obviously a marked difference between the nature of those works which are intended to explain unfulfilled prophecy, and that of the work proposed. Even those which attempt nothing more than to elucidate the fulfilment of prophecy, by tracing the parallel lines of the prediction and its fulfilment, proceed upon a different principle. The former can rarely attain any thing more than plausible conjecture; the latter are always liable to uncertainties owing partly to the ambiguity in the language of all prophecy, and partly to the greater or less degrees of penetration, learning, and general capacity brought to bear upon the subject. The present undertaking is free from each class of impediments. It is not liable to the danger of being a mere conjecture; for it relates only to the past: it is saved from the vagueness which must always attend hypothetical explanations of individual parts, whereof the general process is

still in a state of motion and expansion ; because it relates to the only period between the creation, or at least the deluge, and the present times, which we are justified in considering as a completed cycle of events. There is always great hazard, and it may be added great presumption, in attempting to unfold the secret purposes of Providence, with regard to any detached portion of history ; or to the entire history of any single nation. Of this the author is fully sensible, and would have shrunk from any undertaking against which such a charge might be fairly urged. But having the authority of Scripture for believing that the epoch of our Saviour's coming was " the fulness of time," it seemed to him a perfectly legitimate exercise of reason and study to follow humbly the path, and mark attentively the process, by which this fulness was wrought out. His object is, not to construct a theory of his own, and set that forth as an explanation of the system of the world ; but, adopting the view furnished by revelation, to attempt an elucidation of the mode in which the majestic outline was filled up under the guidance of the same Divine hand by which it was designed. That each part of the process was subordinate and conducive to the general plan will be readily admitted ; to show how it was so, and to illustrate the arrangement, growth, and completion of the wise and merciful scheme, is the object sought to be accomplished.

It will be readily anticipated that the prosecu-

tion of this plan will involve the necessity of investigating the leading characteristics of those great events and mighty empires, which successively stamped their own impress on the greater part of the known world. We shall thus be led to enquire into the peculiarities in the state and character of patriarchal times,—of ancient Egypt,—of the Babylonian,—the Persian,—the Grecian,—and the Roman empires; attempting to ascertain and point out what was the original principle from which the whole germinated, what each derived from its predecessor, called into action as its own, and left in a state of greater complexity and yet ripeness for its successor to inherit; thus tracing the chief steps of that mental and moral culture and probation through which the world was brought. It is not intended to follow the usual method of history, in the dreary narration of wars, revolutions, anarchy, and all their accompanying horrors; we do not wish to follow the footsteps of man only where his path is marked by blood. Our main object is to trace the history of his mind, and to point out the process by which that was cultivated up to its utmost capacity in all its chief bearings, and in full harmony with its native tendencies; and yet the result of all shown to be, the utter impossibility of man, by the highest exercise of all his merely natural powers, and in the most favourable circumstances, ever making even the slightest approximation towards the recovery of that holy con-

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dition in which he was created, without the infusion of a new principle, or, as it may well be termed, "a new creation." That each step was wisely chosen, and placed in the best position, we might safely infer, for Divine wisdom does nothing unnecessarily, or otherwise than best; but as our desire is to answer all fair and reasonable questions, we shall attempt to show what would have been the consequence, if the process had been suspended at any stage previous to the "fulness of time." And as mere conjecture or assertion would be unsatisfactory, we shall confirm our view by reference to the present condition of such tribes or nations as still retain the impress of any particular stage, whether from having been cut off from farther participation in the progress of events and changes, by their distance from the chief scene of action, or their isolated situation, or from their having sprung into separate existence at a later period. This, fortunately, we have abundant means of doing; for owing to colonization, and other similar causes, there is an incessant repetition of all the various stages through which society passes, so that by a moderately skilful observer they may all be seen in contemporaneous existence and simultaneous action, each disparted fragment, like a satellite, retaining the primitive impulse, and reproducing a perfect copy, within diminished boundaries, of that great orbit through which human life revolves.

It may perhaps be expedient to offer one ad-

ditional remark, for the purpose of obviating a prejudice, which, while we think it unreasonable, we would not needlessly excite,—especially as we respect the motive, from the mistaken or too limited use of which it is derived. Some who have not been in the habit of engaging in speculations similar to those proposed, may be startled with the apprehension, that our object is to attempt an explanation of the various great events which have operated on the history of nations, and been productive of important changes in the character of man himself, in such a manner as to exclude the idea of the superintending, or immediate and special agency of Divine Providence. Nothing can be farther from the author's intention: indeed he cannot conceive how the kindred doctrines of special and general Providence, could be more clearly proved, and shown each to involve the other, than by displaying the harmonious co-operation of an immense multiplicity of details, apparently scattered at random over the tide of time,—each in its turn, and according to its nature, aiding in the gradual evolvment of one stupendous scheme, thus manifesting at once the minute care of a special Providence, and the general direction of One, Omniscient, Over-ruling Designer [*a*]. Such is the purpose which the author has in view; and he will count his labour amply rewarded if it shall appear accomplished in any degree commensurate with his wish. It will not be necessary frequently to retrace the analytic process

by which he has arrived at what he will have occasion to state as first principles, from which to proceed synthetically to what he deems just conclusions ; but the reader may rest assured, that nothing shall be stated at hazard,—nothing which has not been the result of serious thought and careful investigation. Reference will be given, in notes at the end of the volume, to authorities, when it appears particularly necessary ; where also such topics may be treated a little more at length, as are but cursorily stated in the text, and seem to require further discussion. Let it be observed, in conclusion, that whatever use be made of profane history or political science, the light of revelation is that in which they shall be viewed, the standard of sacred truth that, by which they shall be tried. History will furnish the facts, in their external aspect ; political science may investigate the interior constitution which gave them life and character ; and philosophy may form her own deductions respecting the mental bearing of the whole continuous phenomena ; but these shall be all held strictly subsidiary, and the controlling spirit shall be a single and reverential desire to comprehend and vindicate each part, and the arrangement and completion of that most wonderful plan, devised and conducted by God himself, for the manifestation of his own wisdom, mercy, and love, in the salvation of his fallen creature, man. In this spirit we may imbibe a portion of what we have termed the theology of history ;

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and while following the general course of the world's annals, and valuing them solely according to their importance and position in the one design, we may have our minds so expanded as to entertain some conception of what may be call the philosophy of Providence; and by availing ourselves of that lifting up of the veil which revelation has afforded, we may obtain, even now, a glimpse into the elements of those mysteries of infinite Wisdom into which angels desire to look, and the study of which, along with these celestial beings, it will be our delight to prosecute throughout eternity.

CHAPTER I.

THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

BEFORE any answer could be attempted to the question, Why the coming of Christ was delayed so long, it seems necessary briefly to consider an enquiry which might very naturally be made concerning what it was in the previous history of man from which such an event derived its importance, or by which it was rendered indispensable. To this interrogation reason, or natural religion, can furnish no answer. That we find ourselves creatures of a very complex and contradictory nature,—prone to indulge in a multitude of propensities, in themselves productive of ultimate injury, or awakening feelings of self-condemnation and remorse,—endowed with mighty powers of apprehension, and filled with lofty aspirations, yet confined within a span, and limited to a duration so straitened, that all these endowments waste their energies in a fruitless search after fitting employment, plunge into evil, or fester into misanthropy,—panting after immortality, and refusing to familiarize our minds with the unwelcome idea of death, yet stumbling over graves, or trampling on dust that once had life, at every step we take,—that such

is our contradictory nature and condition every one knows but too well ; but why it is so, unassisted reason cannot show. That the course of events is governed by an over-ruling Providence, we feel impelled to believe ;—that the God who governs the world is Almighty the stupendous work of creation proves ;—that He is benevolent the preponderance of good strongly indicates ;—but why evil exists at all, in a world governed by the Providence of an Almighty and Benevolent God, is a question equally beyond the reach of human reason. But upon this cheerless state of mental and moral darkness, the morning of Revelation has dawned, shedding at first a feeble, but a steadily increasing light, shining more and more, and destined to brighten forth unto the perfect day.

From this we learn that God created man in a state of perfect innocence and happiness ;—made known to him what was necessary for his instruction in the divine law, as a rule of obedience ;—bestowed upon him a rational intelligence, and consequently the power of choice ;—then left him to the legitimate exercise of that power of choice, in other words, left him free to stand or fall. He was assailed by the Tempter, yielded to his suggestions, broke the commandment, and incurred all the penalties due to the violation of the law. From that moment guilt, misery, and degradation entered into his soul, effacing the image of God, and imprinting in its stead the hideous lineaments of the outcast and

rebellious fiend. And ever since that dread hour what has the history of man presented, but a dark detail of crime, and suffering, and blood, varying its direful annals only by narratives of blacker and more huge atrocity, or wilder and more sanguinary ruin. Vain have been all the subsequent attempts of legislators and of sages to give even a limited and temporary check to the progress of crime and wretchedness. And the reason is obvious: then began the working of that fatal principle sin, the essence of whose nature is to produce degeneracy and destruction;—then entered moral and physical evil into our world, causing all those anomalies and seeming contradictions, both in the course of events, and in the character of man himself, on account of which doubts have been cast upon God's moral government of the world.

This fact, which revelation alone could communicate, sufficiently explains the origin of evil, so far as our world is concerned; and it does not appear necessary here to discuss the metaphysical question respecting the necessity of its existence at all[b]. Let it, however, be remarked, that there are two leading tendencies of moral evil, or sin, as it displays itself in man: first, alienation from God, whom a sense of guilt makes him regard as his offended judge, and consequently an inevitable tendency to turn away from, forget, or misrepresent, the true character of that Being, all whose attributes he considers as linked together in avenging hostility

against him ; secondly, a tendency to death, in some one or other of its aspects, and through some one or other of those processes of corruption by which it advances towards that disastrous and melancholy end. From the one of these tendencies originated all the systems of false and idolatrous religions which have prevailed among men ; because religion being one of the strongest constitutional principles of our nature, impelled man to place an idol within the shrine of that heart which had rejected the presence of the living God. The consequences of this will be traced to greater length hereafter. The other will be found to be the cause of that decay, degeneracy, and dissolution, to which the human being has ever since been subject, in himself and his productions, considered individually or nationally, no sooner reaching maturity than assuming the symptoms of decline. These propositions will be found of most extensive application to the various aspects of human nature, in our future enquiries. At present we merely state them for the purpose of obtaining axiomatic principles, for the guidance of our subsequent deductions. Indeed the two might be reduced into one, with perfect accuracy. Sin being rebellion against God, must be alienation from Him, and consequently spiritual death ; from that inevitably follows the loss of any sure and authoritative moral standard, and thence moral death ; and when the standard of morality is lost there can be no indestructible basis for po-

litical institutions, which must all partake of that one central evil, the very nature of which is death, and must therefore contain within themselves the causes of their own dissolution. But to avoid confusion by too great compression it seems expedient to retain the divided form of the proposition, and regard moral evil in its twofold tendencies ; first, as producing corrupt religion ; and secondly, as causing the degeneracy and destruction of every thing human. The extreme malignancy of moral evil could not have been known to man, had it not been allowed to take its course, and display its nature by its effects, in every position of circumstances, and throughout every successive development of human capacity, physical, intellectual, and moral, and in all the relationships which his gregarious tendencies lead him to form. This shows the necessity of allowing sufficient time for the gradual and natural completion of such a probative and tentatory process, without which neither the wisdom nor the mercifulness of the scheme of redemption could have been adequately shown, —nay, so far as regards man, it may be doubted whether it could have been equally successful, had it not been delayed till the exhaustion of all his own resources proved their utter insufficiency even to retard the fatal progress of guilt, degeneracy, and ruin. In this, as in many other things, the truth appears to be, that “man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.” The trial and the failure of all human remedial mea-

tures, proved the necessity of Divine intervention ; and then, but not till then, that intervention was granted, because then was “ the fulness of time.”

In the historical details necessary to be followed as the connected chain of events intended to be elucidated, it will not be requisite to dwell on matters of inferior importance. Neither will it be necessary to pay particular attention to the intricacies of chronology, our object having reference to the sequence, rather than to the particular dates, of historical occurrences. Indeed there is no subject less satisfactory, after all the researches of learned men, than that of chronology ; and we know of no system worthy of any thing like implicit credit [*c*]. Many errors have evidently crept into that of the Bible, owing greatly to the extreme liability of transcribers to mistake in the use of the Hebrew numerals. The Samaritan, that of Josephus, of Eusebius, and of Syncellus, are all equally devoid of accuracy : and modern chronologists, however they may have succeeded in confuting each other, have utterly failed in producing any thing capable of commanding conviction. From this general censure Hales is no exception, though at present his system is very favourably received by many,—especially by those who are more or less followers of the German semi-sceptical theology, because it seems to furnish somewhat of a wider field for speculation. Instead of attempting to date events from the age of the world, the

best method seems to be, to date them backwards from the Christian era, considering that as a fixed point, and arranging all events according to the period of their occurrence before or after it. This will be sufficient for our purpose, and will preclude the necessity of much unsatisfactory discussion.

The period of the deluge is that from which we deem it expedient to commence our disquisition, without thinking it at all necessary to assign any fixed date to that awful catastrophe. Some may think, however, that more notice ought to be taken of the period between the creation and the flood, though we cannot establish any certainty with regard to its exact duration. To obviate any objection likely to be urged on this point, a few preliminary remarks may be offered.

One complete cycle seems to have been evolved in the age before the flood; and the race of man placed on a footing of almost entire newness, so far as circumstances were concerned. Adam was created for immortality; and though his sin brought upon him the doom of death, it pleased the merciful Judge to suspend the sentence for nearly a thousand years. This immense period seems to have been the term of human life before the deluge; and to us it seems almost like an eternity. Even our three-score-and-ten years, broken and uncertain as that little span is, can delude us into the folly of putting death and its dread reckoning far from us, as if we were never to die, and might therefore neglect •

any preparation for the after judgment. But if we were to see before us the prospect of a life of one thousand years, we should doubtless regard death as a bugbear indeed, and throw off all the salutary restraint which the fear of it now exercises. Suppose our tendencies to every kind of sinful indulgence as strong as at present, with the prospect of such lengthened enjoyment and immunity from danger, and we may easily imagine with what hundred-fold eagerness we should plunge into all kinds of enormity, and revel in the wildest licentiousness. But this is the very consummation to which the race of Adam had reached, when “ God looked on the earth ; and behold it was corrupt and filled with violence,” and God determined to destroy the earth with its inhabitants.

Another thing which contributed towards the rapid completion of this degeneracy, was the extreme fertility of the soil, which rendered a very slight degree of labour sufficient to produce abundant means of subsistence. The whole condition of the antediluvian world must have been very different from what it subsequently became. The air must have been much purer and more salubrious ;—the vaporous exhalations not being dense enough to refract the solar rays into a rainbow. The vegetation also must have been much more exuberant ; as is proved by the investigations of geology. Now the concurrence of extreme longevity, with extreme amenity of climate and fertility of soil, could not fail to

excite the most unbounded voluptuousness, and proneness to every dissolute indulgence. The only arts of which mention is made, as having been invented, and these by the progeny of Cain, were music and the working of metals,—or the arts of luxury and violence. And the wanton artifices of the daughters of these descendants of Cain soon seduced the race of Seth into participation in all their idolatry and crimes, till the whole earth was corrupt, with the exception of one single family.

The age before the deluge we should be inclined to regard, as the development of the paradisaical state, when tainted by the infusion of sin. Its duration was much shorter than any subsequent state ; because its degeneracy was much sooner and more completely developed. Little information is given respecting it in the sacred writings, except what has respect to its appalling conclusion. From this paucity of information we may fairly infer, that it bore little upon the subsequent dispensations of Providence, and the Bible was not given for the gratification of our curiosity. One important lesson, however, we may learn,—that the combination of the most favourable circumstances forms the most dangerous trial, and when perverted is productive of the most pernicious consequences. A term of life almost like an immortality, and the luxuriant abundance of earth's richest productions, filled the heart of man with the utmost presumption, criminality, and guilt, till the

deluge was commissioned to sweep the lawless race from off the face of the earth, to make way for a new arrangement, under circumstances less immediately fatal.

The deluge having exterminated the whole of mankind with the exception of one family, furnished an opportunity for the commencement of a series of trials, and the development of a process of culture, unembarrassed by the causes which had led to the speedy corruption and terrible ruin of the paradisaical, Adamic, or primitive patriarchal state. The physical effects of the flood gave rise to great atmospheric changes, lessening its salubrity, and also its temperature; and at the same time diminished the fertility of the soil, rendering a greater degree of labour necessary. The life of man was shortened, and the stern and terrible tuition of death rendered more immediately urgent. With the recent doom of the world in their remembrance, and the knowledge of their own death so much more near at hand, and the necessity of toil so much greater, a new course began, in which the full powers of the human being were to be cultivated and proved, and all his susceptibilities explored, previous to the coming of the promised seed of the woman, who was to bruise the head of the serpent. It is because the postdiluvian period is so completely marked off from the antediluvian, by very intelligible and significant distinctions, that we have not judged it necessary to attempt any lengthened

account of it, and do not consider it as forming any influential element in the process of culture through which the world was subsequently brought, preparatory to the opening of the Christian dispensation. And we have offered these few observations respecting it, that we may not be thought to have negligently overlooked it, and thereby to have vitiated the fountain of our subsequent investigations.

Taking the Bible as our guide it is scarcely necessary to state that we entirely reject those speculations which set out with representing the primeval state of man as being that of savage life, with all his energies devoted to the task of supplying the wants of his merely animal nature, and then proceed to theorise upon the growth of society out of the chance suggestions of increasing wants. But such a view is even as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural,—as contrary to reason as to revelation. There is no instance to be found of savages originating their own improvement; though the progress of degeneracy is very plainly to be traced among them. External aid is necessary to raise man from barbarism; and even when considerably advanced in civilization his tendency is to retrograde, which is prevented only by the strong stimulus of mutual rivalry arising from mutual intercourse. The tent of the Arab may be found pitched among the splendid ruins of Palmyra; but he will never be seen attempting to restore or emulate its glories. The truth is, that the savage state is the mere

degeneracy of one more cultivated; when wanderers or exiles, few and helpless, driven aloof from their fellow men, sink overpowered beneath the pressure of physical necessities, and lose all traces of their previous civilization. The proof of this is seen daily in the character of colonies, settled upon desert and uninhabited countries. For some generations they will seem to degenerate; because the arts of civilized life perish before the wants of physical subsistence; and it is only when the sterility of nature has been subdued, and commercial intercourse has begun to awaken their dormant tastes, that they recommence the career of civilization. A settlement in a country previously inhabited is in a different condition, and may retain much of the skill and polish of the mother country; though even then the tendency to degenerate is often too strong for the spirit of refinement. Of this instances enough will occur to the mind of every reader, without more specification.

The process by which the world was repeopled after the deluge was very similar to that of a colony from a civilized, settling in an uninhabited country. Whatever was the amount of antediluvian cultivation, it was doubtless possessed by Noah and his sons; and that it was considerable may readily be believed, though all that can be known on the subject is extremely little, and to indulge in mere conjecture would be fruitless. For some time after quitting the ark they would undoubtedly reside together, and in the near vi-

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cinity of the place of their deliverance. During that period the authority of Noah was simply that of a father, only enhanced by the peculiar nature of existing circumstances, which made him also the father of the human race. The increasing numbers of mankind would cause his progeny to extend their local habitations gradually to more convenient distances, especially as the pastoral life, requiring scope for large flocks of cattle, would soon render such extension necessary ; and his sons would then become each the paternal lord of his own family and its widening branches, leaving still to Noah the chief, and what might then be termed, the patriarchal dignity. This is the natural, and there can be no doubt that it was the actual origin of patriarchal government, in which the heads of tribes exercised the sovereign authority less as arbitrary rulers, than in virtue of their real or assumed paternity. While their dwellings continued near each other, though there might not be great advancement made in civilization, there would be no very perceptible or rapid degeneracy ; but as the distance of any part became greater from the central seat of government, and their intercourse with the more sage and experienced was interrupted and rare, the usual consequences would soon begin to follow. They would degenerate in knowledge of all kinds, in civilization, in purity of religious observances, in political institutions, and in public and private morality. Such a process was inevitable ; and

it would soon of itself have occasioned insubordination to the patriarchal rule, general disorder, and the dissolution of that earliest form of society.

It appears, however, that in one instance, at least, this natural tendency to dissolution was anticipated by the rebellious conduct of one leading branch of the patriarchal family. Ham seems very early to have displayed contempt of authority in his irreverent behaviour to his father. It may easily be supposed that his conduct to his brothers would be still more offensive ; and that bitter contentions would frequently arise among them. Now as Noah was at that time both patriarchal sovereign and priest, it cannot be supposed that those who despised his paternal authority would pay much deference to his religious instructions. Hence rebellion would naturally be accompanied by apostacy ; and as man is prone to evil, this early defection of one leading tribe would threaten to spread contamination among all the others, unless measures could be taken to arrest its progress. This may have been the cause of that division of the earth among the descendants of Noah, so early as the third generation after the flood, arranged, in all probability, by the patriarch, under the immediate direction of God. According to this division, Europe and the shores of Asia Minor fell to the lot of Japheth ; Central Asia was assigned to Shem ; and Ham was sent to the more distant regions of Africa. To this arrangement all

the descendants of the patriarch seem to have submitted dutifully, with the exception of certain branches of the Hamonian family. One of these, under their chief, Canaan, seized Palestine, which of right belonged to the sons of Shem; whence the perfect justice of their being afterwards expelled by the posterity of Eber, grandson of Shem, to whom it had been prospectively allotted. But a still more formidable opposition was made by Nimrod, who appears to have been in every respect an usurper. The term by which he is designated in Scripture, 'a mighty hunter,' briefly indicates the means by which he rose to power. It may easily be imagined, that while the numbers of mankind were few, the beasts of prey would increase very rapidly, and would soon become the cause of no small alarm to pastoral tribes, subsisting chiefly upon their herds. Hence the bold hunter would be the benefactor of the hardy shepherd, their interests would become identical, and by a very natural and easy process, their characters would assimilate, to that degree at least, common to a leader and his followers. Thus did Nimrod, from being a successful hunter, become the leader of a numerous and daring band, enabling him to bid defiance to all superior authority, and to refuse to accompany his kinsmen to their distant and less attractive allotment. It is observable also, that Nimrod in thus aiming at separate sovereignty, directly infringed the rule of patriarchal succession, he being the youngest son of Cush. Thus

did he at once rebel against the Divine commands, issued through Noah, and usurp dominion over the Cushites, instead of leaving it to his elder brothers, according to the established custom. The subsequent exploits of this arch-rebel and proto-tyrant are very briefly mentioned by Moses; yet so as to show the great influence they exerted over the history of man in that early period.

It is generally thought that the division of the earth, and the confusion of tongues at Babel, were contemporaneous events, or rather, that the one was caused by the other. This is certainly a mistake, and gives rise to unnecessary obscurity, and apparent contradiction. It is said of Nimrod, "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel,"—and again, "out of that land went forth Ashur and builded Nineveh." But this evidently shows, that before the building of Babel, Ashur had been settled in that land, which could not have been had the division of the earth not previously taken place. The truth seems to be, that the general separation of mankind, in consequence of the division of the earth, and the dispersion of Babel, were two different events, the latter occurring a considerable time after the former.

Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood, and as there is every reason to suppose that the allotment of their respective shares was made to his descendants by his express direction, in which he was guided by

Divine inspiration, it must have taken place some time before his death; and indeed it is evident that it did, since he outlived by some years Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided. It is not likely that the division would take place till the district of Armenia began to be too narrow for the accommodation of their numbers, which could hardly be before the end of the third century, when they may have amounted to nearly a million. If Nimrod led away nearly a third of that number, or even one-tenth, his followers would be greatly superior in numbers to any of the subdivided families against whom he might afterwards direct his hostile efforts; though till the division took place he was greatly outnumbered. This would cause him to depart in a different direction from the seat of the main body, till they should have separated, keeping meanwhile his own followers together, after which he could return, and carry his rebellious designs into execution with perfect ease and security. How well this supposition agrees with the actual course of events will very speedily appear.

The dispersion is related by Moses after having given a detailed account of the migration of families; and with all the distinctness of a separate and less complicated occurrence. This was to be expected from the main aim of sacred history, which is to show the progress of evil among mankind, and thereby prove the necessity of Divine interposition: and since this was the

first great act of apostacy after the flood, and Babel, or Babylon, was destined to occupy an important position in the affairs of the world, as the "mother of abominations," it was requisite that its origin should be clearly described. In the commencement of the narrative concerning it, there is an ambiguity in the use of two words, which has led the majority of commentators astray. "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." It would be better translated thus: "And the whole *land* was of one language; and of one *pronunciation*." Now as the only 'land' specifically mentioned in the previous context was the land of Shinar, where Babel was built, the meaning seems to be, that though on account of the previous migration of families, differences of dialect had arisen, tending to the prevention of great combinations, the confederate followers of Nimrod, by keeping together had retained at once an identity of purpose and an uniformity of language, and were thus in an excellent condition for laying the foundation of an universal monarchy. That this was their intention seems not obscurely intimated by the reason assigned for building their tower, "Let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Their ambitious project was frustrated by a sudden and miraculous confusion of their common language; or rather perhaps by the immediate splitting of it into numerous dialects, sufficient to distract their unanimity without

utterly destroying the root and body of the language itself. Profane historians also allude to the dispersion of Babel; and add that it was accompanied by tremendous displays of Divine power, the tower being rent by lightning, and its materials partially scattered by a mighty tempest.

The following may, perhaps, approach as nearly to a true view of the whole affair as it is now possible to obtain. Upon the assignment of their respective portions by Noah to the several houses and families of mankind; Nimrod, who had acquired immense influence over the Cushites, refused to accompany the Hamonians to Africa, and quitting Armenia at the head of a very numerous body, bent his course eastward along the borders of the Caspian sea. Being checked by the deserts of Scythian Tartary, he deflected to the south, and after wandering some time in those regions, turned his course westward, and thus "journeying from the east," according to the sacred narrative, arrived in the fertile plains of Shinar, already inhabited by the progeny of Ashur. These he speedily expelled, seized upon their territories, and began to build strong cities, and to lay the foundation of what he intended to be an universal monarchy. The Assyrians driven towards the mountainous districts, imitated his example, and built cities in their own defence, of which Nineveh was the chief, and afterwards became the seat of empire. But it was not the

will of the Almighty to permit the natural progress of society to be interrupted at that early stage by the oppressive and chilling domination of a barbarian monarchy. Their tower was shattered by lightning, they were confounded by a failure in the power of distinct articulation, they desisted from their undertaking, forsook the scene of judgment and confusion, and fled dispersed over the face of the earth, in search of the great body of their kindred Hamonians. Vast numbers settled in Arabia, thence called the land of Cush, but unfortunately in our version of the Bible, commonly translated Ethiopia. Others, it would appear, crossed the straits of Babelmandel, seized upon the districts of Meröe and Nubia, and gradually extended themselves along the valley of the Nile, already inhabited by a kindred, though a less refined race, the progeny of Mizraim. It seems very probable also, that a considerable body must have made their way into India; for there is much in common between the monuments, superstitions, and names in ancient Egypt, and those of similar antiquity in India, for which it is difficult to account except upon the hypothesis of a common origin at some period indefinitely distant. That they did not all leave the land of Shinar, however, appears perfectly evident from the incessant hostility which prevailed between the Assyrians and the Babylonians for centuries subsequent to that dispersion, the continuation of the name Cushdim, and the prevalence of

astronomy, and the Magian philosophy and religion.

It is not to be supposed that the dispersion of Babel occurred immediately after the violent seizure of the land of Shinar by Nimrod, nor indeed, perhaps during the life of that usurper himself. Were we to institute an exact enquiry it might be possible to show that between two and three centuries had elapsed, after the usurpation, before the dispersion took place, and that the Cushites under Nimrod and his immediate successors, had made great progress in art, and even science, before their pride and ambition arose to that height of impiety as to draw down upon them the vengeance of heaven. The dispersion of the Cushites arising from confusion of dialect, accompanied by other and more terrible displays of God's displeasure, seems to have been followed by a resumption of the land by the families of Shem, though probably less in compact bodies, than by such tribes as had not previously obtained any definite abode. Among others the race of Eber, to whom Palestine was allotted, being kept out of their inheritance by the Canaanites, availed themselves of the opportunity of obtaining settlements in a country now half vacated. But in this they fell into the same error as did their descendants, the Israelites, at a later period ; and were soon led to adopt the false worship of the apostate Chaldeans. This very fact is stated by Joshua in his farewell address to the tribes of Israel. "Your fathers

dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods." And at the same time the superior intelligence which Abraham must have obtained by his intercourse with that highly cultivated nation was well adapted to qualify him for the important part he was destined afterwards to act, and tends to account for the great personal respect with which he was every where received.

Babylon seems to have been neglected and to have lain waste for many ages after the dispersion; as it is no more named in Scripture till a short time before Nebuchadnezzar, under whom it recovered the empire of the world. During that interval we read frequently of the Chaldeans, or rather the Cushdim, evidently the remains of Nimrod's followers, who still continued to be distinguished by their superior scientific attainments. The Shemitic tribes seem to have taken courage upon the dispersion, and recovered much of the land of Shinar from the weakened and disheartened Cushites, imposing a tribute upon those whom they permitted to retain their abodes. It would appear indeed, that a general confederacy had been formed among the Shemitic nations against the Hamonians; as we find the kings of the Canaanitish race subdued by the same descendants of Shem, who had reconquered the land of Shinar. The designations of these kings evince their Shemitic origin, and indicate plainly enough, that the

war was a family alliance against the common enemy. The king of Elam, or Persia, seems to have been the chief; and the king of Elam, is merely the Assyrian king; the king of Shinar must have been the king of that recovered province of which Babel had been the capital, but was then lying uninhabited and partly in ruins. After twelve years of servitude the Canaanitish kings rebelled, and were again reduced by the same confederacy; which had become too powerful to be resisted by any combination which could at that time be formed against it. The Shemitic nations had now become the aggressors, and might in their turn, under Chedorlaomer, have aspired to universal monarchy. Providence again interposed to prevent the premature attempt. Lot was involved in the calamity of the king of Sodom; and Abraham rescued him, by surprising the confederate kings in a night attack, and giving them such a complete overthrow as utterly broke their power, leaving society again free to follow its natural progress.

It is not our purpose to dwell upon wars and convulsions, farther than a brief statement of them may contribute to clearing the way for our main design; but we cannot help adverting to the light which this view of patriarchal times tends to throw upon some very obscure points in ancient history, and even upon mythology. The hiatus which all historians acknowledge in the histories of Babylon and Nineveh is accounted

for satisfactorily, by admitting its actual existence, and showing how it happened. After the reign of Nimrod, and perhaps one or two successors, the Cushites were dispersed, Babylon laid desolate, and the remnants of that first monarchy reduced into a state of servitude by the neighbouring Shemitic nations. They, in their turn, became powerful, overran the greater part of Asia, where any of the race of Ham had settled, and were smitten back into obscurity by the successful enterprise of Abraham. Many ages passed before any other great empire arose; and the next was the Assyrian, whose capital was Nineveh, and which still retained Babylonia as a tributary province. Upon the decline of the Assyrian power, Babylon again became mighty; and historians have laboured to give us a succession of kings, and a detail of exploits, which never existed. The wars of the confederate Shemitic kings, under Chedorlaomer the Elamite, not Assyrian or Babylonian, have furnished groundwork for the fabulous deeds of a Ninus and a Semiramis, the very existence of either of whom is a matter of great uncertainty, to say the least. To add to the confusion, historians desirous to raise the glory of their respective nations, have taken up the traditional accounts of these confederate expeditions, and ascribed them each to his own country, with all their oral exaggerations. Hence the absurd statements of Berosus, Ctesias, Diodorus, and others, which it is quite unnecessary to cite for refutation.

When it is remembered that Greece derived her mythology from Egypt, it seems not too fanciful to suppose, that the fabulous wars of the Titans, and the Giants, may be explained by reference to those early contests between the sons of Cush, and the posterity of Shem. The rebellion of Nimrod, the overthrow of his power, and the flight of his followers into Egypt, is confusedly shadowed forth in the wars of the Titans against Saturn, and their expulsion from heaven by the Thunderer. This is stated to have been an Egyptian fable, both by Diodorus and Lucian; but the Greeks in adopting it altered it to suit their own mythology, and thus obscured its historical origin and reference. The wars of the Giants, evidently a subsequent event, though sometimes confounded by mythologists, may have been that in which the Shemitic confederates completed the subjugation of the Hamonians, and secured their own ascendancy in Asia. It may be considered a confirmation of this opinion, that the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, and its vicinity, are represented by Moses to have been people of gigantic stature, so that the war may have been literally a war of Giants. Not only the poetic mythology, but various fragments of ancient historians, preserved in Josephus, Eusebius, Theophilus, Athenagoras, and others, particularly a very extraordinary Sibylline fragment, allude very distinctly to the same wars, and term the rebellious people Titans [*d*]. This name is

said by Bryant to mean, worshippers of fire ; and indeed though he extends his theory to most unwarrantable lengths, he has sufficiently proved, both that the race of Ham were the first apostates from the true patriarchal worship, and that the form of their apostacy was originally Zabaism, or the worship of the heavenly bodies, and of fire as the most appropriate material symbol.

Having thus attempted to trace an outline of that very early and obscure period of history, the patriarchal age, we return to what is our more immediate object, an investigation of its character, political, intellectual, moral, and religious. The political aspect of the patriarchal age has been already shown to be the necessary result of its peculiar condition. During the life of Noah his influence over his descendants must have been as absolute as that of a father over his family ; and founded on the same natural principle. Being at the same time a man of distinguished wisdom and piety, it is impossible to conceive a more benignant and yet dignified species of authority, or one to which the submission of both the will and the heart could be more cheerfully rendered. Not till the increasing numbers of mankind rendered their separation necessary, would there be any real diminution of this authority ; but then the paternal head of each migrating tribe would naturally assume over his immediate followers the same mild sway under which he had himself been reared. The

advantages of such a mode of government consisted chiefly in the nature of the relationship between ruler and subjects, which was that of blood, and consequently the power by which it was held together would be that of mutual affection. This would in a great measure preclude tyranny in the ruler, and slavery in the ruled; for how could the patriarchal chief act with cruelty to those who were perhaps all his own descendants? and what sense of degradation could spring from being subject to him who was not more truly the sovereign than the father of his people? If to this benevolent form of government we should add the glowing descriptions of the earth's primitive fertility in antediluvian times, preserved by tradition, nothing would be wanting to realize the golden age of the poets. Something closely similar still exists among the Arab tribes; and prevailed till very recently among the Celtic clanships, especially in the Highlands of Scotland. There the sway was absolute, and yet the subjection not slavish. It may be remarked, in passing, that this was very different from the feudal law of chiefship; which was purely of a military nature, and combined the most irresponsible and unlimited despotism, with the most abject servility. From any such accusation the patriarchal rule must stand acquitted; yet did it involve a sufficiently numerous and weighty train of disadvantages.

If it was suited to an early stage in human affairs, and had a decided tendency to facilitate

migration, and consequently to forward the re-peopling of the world ; it was at least equally ill adapted to promote civilization, in any of its forms. Its almost unavoidable influence, indeed, was directly the reverse. A pastoral population must needs be spread thinly over extensive tracts of country, in order to obtain sufficient room for their numerous flocks and herds. This will besides occasion frequent divisions and offsets from the main community, which branches removing into wilder districts, and to greater distances from the central seat of knowledge and government, and being almost wholly engrossed with providing for the supply of physical wants, instead of advancing in cultivation, will scarcely retain much of what they had previously received. Their habits may be simple, and their wants few and easily supplied ; but their civilization will at the best be stationary, and on a scale correspondingly low. That Noah was aware of this disadvantage, and attempted to introduce a remedy appears from the attention he bestowed upon agricultural pursuits, and his culture of the vine in particular, as likely to prove a strong inducement to the wandering tribes to settle and cultivate the soil. The wisdom of this device is plain from the well known fact, that when men acquire a fixed property in the soil, all the arts of industry are immediately called into exertion, society assumes regularly constituted forms, and makes rapid progress in refinement. The base conduct of Ham seems to have rendered the pa-

triarch's plan abortive; and the rebellion of Nimrod gave a fatal shock to the patriarchal form of sovereignty. Very soon after that period we find kings and nations, not patriarchs and their tribes; though in remote and thinly peopled countries it would still prevail, or be revived for the purpose of migrations, and the establishment of new colonies, as in the case of Abraham.

The rebellion of Nimrod may be easily understood by a glance at the history of Asiatic Tartary; where the structure of society is still very similar to that of patriarchal times, consisting of pastoral tribes, roaming from place to place as necessity or inclination may prompt them. All the full grown males of such a tribe must be ready-trained, and athletic warriors, from the very nature of their customary life; and as they move in a body, the whole of the tribe can go to war at once. Suppose the chief of one of these nomad hordes to be a man of ambitious spirit and military genius, it will be no difficult matter for him to subdue the next tribe, and blend it with his own. This will have nearly doubled the number of his followers; and each fresh conquest, instead of weakening will serve but to increase his power. Such was the process by which Tamerlane, Nadir-Shah, Ginghis-khan, and others, have been able to overrun whole continents, and form extensive monarchies in the course of a few years. But the same principle which gave such facility to the erection of a mighty empire, was equally potent to cause its

dissolution. One great defeat,—especially the death of the chief,—might rend asunder the unweildy mass, and scatter it into fragments over the face of the country, so recently prostrate beneath its collected power. To such vicissitudes the patriarchal age would have been continually exposed from its very structure, and they must have operated seriously against its progress in civilization, by the dreadful alternations of tyrannical devastation, and chaotic anarchy, had not Providence curbed the lawless will, and moulded the fierce passions of men, causing them to work together for good. The early attempts of Nimrod, and of the confederacy under Chedarlaomer, instructed mankind in the necessity of such modifications of the patriarchal form as might prevent the sudden rise of a dangerous power by the forcible combination of many hardy nomadic tribes; and the successive repression of these primeval monarchies, restored a comparative equipoise, allowing men to prosecute the arts of civilization in security, while the native fertility of the land which had been the chief scene of these events, exerted a strong congenial influence. The followers of Nimrod remained in great numbers in the land of Babylonia, mingling peaceably with the race of Shem, the rightful owners of the country, and soon became so eminently skilled in art and science, that the very name, Cushdim, was equivalent to that of philosopher, especially in astronomical science.

It thus appears that the patriarchal form of

government contained within itself the cause of its own dissolution. It afforded great facilities for migration by habituating men to move from place to place, with all their families and means of subsistence, and thus was well calculated to spread population over the world: but it was equally fitted for the sudden formation of great monarchies, destructive of its own primary principle, and hurtful to the progress of civilization. It taught mankind subordination, by the tenderest of all methods, and as children are still taught it, by the affectionate influence of paternal authority; but it left an open and easy path to usurpation, and exposed the body of the people to the most irresponsible despotism. It may therefore be fairly considered as teaching an important political lesson, in the very simplest form in which society can exist;—namely, that not even institutions arising from, and retaining the nature of, the nearest and dearest relationship, can of themselves secure either their own permanency, or the peace and welfare of the community. And why? Because there was an evil in human nature more deeply seated than such a form of political institutions could reach; poisoning them in their very source, and thus infusing what must speedily cause their destruction. Wherever the same, or a closely similar structure of society subsists, we see it still followed by the same pernicious results; in proof of which we need but to refer to Asiatic Tartary, to the Arabs, and to the American Indians.

One experiment, however, would not be deemed enough. Society might be formed on many different plans, and government conducted by means of many various methods, some of which might be more successful; and at least one thing had been learned,—the effect of combination, by which the aggregate being, man, was enabled to triumph over animals far more powerful, individually, than himself, and even to control for his own purposes the powers of nature, thus establishing the dominion of rational intelligence over the whole of the irrational and material world.

Very little is, or can be, known respecting the intellectual attainments of that very remote period of antiquity, the sacred historian giving us little direct information, and almost all other historical records being either evidently fabulous, or commencing at a much later date. The wants of mankind being then very few and simple, yet such as to engross much of their time, their progress in any thing deserving the name of science must necessarily have been very limited. Pastoral habits, however favourable to a certain rude generosity and open simplicity of character, and even to a grave and almost meditative turn of mind, have little tendency to cultivate those faculties which delight in the tasteful productions of art, or the acute subtleties of a whetted intellect. At the same time we have sufficient proof that the patriarchal ages had made no slight progress in certain departments

of civilization. Their architectural skill must have been considerable, before they could have attempted the erection, or even conceived the idea, of such a building as the tower of Babel. Their knowledge of the simple mechanical powers seems to have been at least equal to that of modern times. Of this the gigantic works of Egypt, and of ancient India, furnish abundant proof; and even excite the wonder of scientific men to conjecture how they could have been accomplished.

Leaving the description of these mighty structures to works which professedly treat of such matters, we would remark, that they harmonize with the natural tendency of the human being in that stage of his existence, when he first begins to acquire a consciousness of his own powers. All his purposes are then ambitious, all his undertakings formed on a gigantic scale. The triumphs of combined exertion excites that exuberant sense of energy, which makes him think no enterprise too great, no difficulty insurmountable. This is exemplified in the youth of every nation; and even in the youth of individuals. A band of schoolboys will dig a cave, or build an embankment across a stream, or erect a pillar on a craggy mountain top, with a degree of indefatigable perseverance, of which in after life they would be incapable. Besides, in such early ages subsistence is easily obtained, and labour is of comparatively little value to the people themselves, as a disposable

commodity ; hence the readiness with which almost a whole nation might be engaged in the execution of one great work. Under such circumstances Babel, and the Pyramids of Egypt were built, and the caves of Elephanta and Ellora hollowed out ; and in a later but a similar age the Chinese wall erected. Yet it is to be observed, that all these structures, though necessarily the productions of rude and early ages, resulted from what may be fairly termed the second structure of society, that, namely, of monarchical or rather despotic domination, it being manifestly impossible that they could have been attempted till many tribes had been collected into one body, subject to a single ruling and sovereign will. They were, in short, partly the result of man's natural delight in the exertion of those vast powers, which planning intelligence and combined physical effort had showed him that he possessed ; and partly the wanton display of unlimited sovereignty in the proud and ambitious despot.

If the habits of an early age are unfavourable to refinements and subtleties, they are by no means so to the culture of the imagination and the meditative faculties. In all pastoral countries the inhabitants are distinguished scarcely more by a romantic and imaginative, than by a profoundly thoughtful cast of character. And here again the analogy holds between the aggregate and the individual. In youth novelty and admiration rule the mind, and every thing

wears a more brilliant colouring and assumes a grander aspect, than it ever can in after life, when viewed by the sadder and maturer mind, clad in the graver hues and reduced to the diminished standard of reality. Who does not remember the bewildered admiration with which his young eyes gazed on the starry heavens,—the extravagant notions that crowded upon his mind,—and the questions foolish enough, yet not easy to answer, which he proposed concerning them to his father? This may serve to indicate the natural reasons why the attention of the patriarchal ages should have been early and forcibly directed to the study of astronomy. Accordingly we find, that the Chaldeans were celebrated for their skill in this science in times of the most remote antiquity. It has been observed also, that the pyramids of Egypt are so constructed that they might subserve various astronomical purposes; whence some have hazarded the conjecture, that they might have been erected chiefly with that view. It is recorded that Calisthenes enquired minutely into the extent of the Chaldean astronomy, and found that their observations reached back to a date 2234 years before the Christian era—a date very nearly the same as that usually assigned to the building of Babel. According to our hypothesis this date corresponds with the division of the earth, while the building of Babel was some centuries later; and it is certainly more probable that the separate observations of the

Cushites should commence from the period of their rebellion, and consequent separation in a body from the other nomadic portions of mankind, than from that time of terrors and calamities when they were themselves dispersed. Indeed the superior knowledge and attainments of the Cushites above their brethren of that early period, can scarcely be accounted for on any other grounds than those assumed by this hypothesis, while it seems to give a satisfactory solution. Before the division of the earth the knowledge of the whole race would be nearly common to each tribe. Their separation into small sections, and dispersion into different districts, would break up this community; and the increased difficulties incident to the formation of new settlements, might occasion the loss of all merely speculative knowledge. But the Cushites remaining in a large and national form under Nimrod would retain all their previous acquirements, and upon obtaining a permanent residence in the land of Shinar, would transmit unimpaired their observations from the period in which they became the sole depositaries of astronomical science. The perversion of that science led very speedily into idolatry, which was the more likely to happen from the fact that they had already rebelled against Noah's authority, infringed the course of patriarchal succession, seized violently upon the territories apportioned to others, and had only to crown their guilt by the addition of apostacy.

The morality and the religion of any age or country must be intimately blended, especially when the forms, institutions, and rules of both are few and simple, as in patriarchal times ; and they will not, therefore, require to be separately investigated, at the same time that it is a matter of some importance to obtain as distinct ideas concerning them as possible, since by a correct understanding of that point, we shall obtain a clear and satisfactory commencement for our subsequent investigations.

In this it is obvious that recourse must be had to the Bible almost alone, there being no other authentic record of sufficient antiquity, though certain correlative hints may be found in ancient historical fragments. The institution of sacrifices must have been immediately subsequent to the fall, its very nature being expiatory, and indicating the necessity of some atonement before guilty man could approach the Just and Holy God. The sacrificial rite may therefore be fairly considered of Divine institution ; and as we find it employed by Noah immediately upon coming out of the Ark, it is evident that it formed the leading rite of patriarchal worship. The same circumstance accounts for its universal prevalence ; for it cannot be shown to spring from the dictates of nature, and is certainly contrary to those of philosophy, apart from revelation. Considered simply in itself, it cannot be imagined that the involuntary death of a guiltless, irrational, and irresponsible animal

could atone for the voluntary wickedness of rational and responsible human beings; though nothing could be more suitable as a positive ordinance, typical of an expiation to be made in due time by One Predicted Deliverer, in the nature which had sinned, though not implicated in its guilt. The only other topics connected with religion, and immediately respecting the age of Noah, are; the renewal of that blessing originally given to Adam, in virtue of which man was destined to replenish the earth, and to possess dominion over it; and the establishing of a covenant and promise that the world should not again be overwhelmed by a deluge. That the promise of "seed-time and harvest, etc." amounted to a repeal of the curse of barrenness and a restoration of the earth to its pristine fertility, as is supposed by Sherlock, we can by no means admit; but this at least is clear, that since labour conduces to health, cultivates the faculties, and tends to repress vicious passions, it has been graciously over-ruled so as to become a blessing. For the additional articles of the patriarchal creed we must consult the book of Job, in which they will be found entire.

Much has been written concerning the author and era of this celebrated book, and very conflicting opinions entertained. Into these we cannot enter, farther than to state what seems the most probable or satisfactory, not to say certain, conclusion. Job appears to have been a patriarchal chief of Idumea, of the race of

Joktan, one of the descendants of Shem. The period in which he lived cannot be exactly ascertained, unless the very ingenious calculation given by Hales, founded on the difference between the places in the heavens, which the constellations mentioned in the book, must have occupied then, and what they do now, according to the astronomical phenomenon of the precession of the equinoxes, which would fix its date 2130 years before Christ, above a hundred before the birth of Abraham. This would correspond nearly with the dispersion of Babel, and would account for the predatory incursions of the "bands of the Chaldeans," by whom the possessions of Job were pillaged. It has already been stated, that considerable bodies of the scattered Cushites fled to Arabia Felix, settled there, whence that part of Arabia was called in Scripture the land of Cush, in our translation Ethiopia, and spread themselves along the Red sea, till stopped by coming into contact with the descendants of Shem, its original inhabitants. Thus both the Sabeans and Chaldeans were naturally in a state of hostility with the Idumeans; besides that restlessness resulting from having lost one home, and not acquired the settled habits of permanent residence in another. The inhabitants of Idumea were early celebrated for their advancement in knowledge and civilization, of which the book of Job furnishes the most incontestible evidence. But the chief value of the book consists in its containing a very full

view of the religious tenets of the patriarchal age. By its insertion into the canon of Scripture we have placed before us, a distinct account of the three dispensations, which it has pleased the Almighty to give to man : I. The Patriarchal, from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, the interval between Abraham and Moses being preparatory to the giving of the next. II. The Mosaic, from Moses to Malachi, followed by another preparatory interval. III. The Christian, of which there shall be no end, till time shall be no more.

In that early age, then, it appears that each patriarchal chief was not only the ruler and judge, but also the priest of his tribe. Job conducted the expiatory sacrifices in behalf of his sons, both as their father and their priest, and no doubt instructed them in the leading doctrines which he had learned from his progenitor. What these were, may be gathered from the tenor of the discussions between Job and his friends, and may be thus stated and arranged.

1. The creation of the world by one supreme, omnipresent, and eternal Being, of infinite wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, unchangeable in all his attributes.

2. The government of the world by the perpetual and superintending providence of God, whence arises man's duty to fear and serve Him.

3. That this providential government is carried on by the ministration of a heavenly hier-

archy, composed of various ranks and orders, possessing different names, dignities, and offices.

4. An apostacy in some rank or order of these powers ; of which Satan seems to have been the chief.

5. The good and evil powers or principles equally formed by the Creator, and hence indiscriminately denominated " Sons of God."

6. That Zabaism, or the worship of the stars, was a judicial offence, cognisable by the judges ; who, as patriarchs, united in their own persons both civil and religious authority.

7. Original sin, or " the sinfulness of that state whereinto man fell, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature."

8. The propitiation of the Creator by sacrifices ; and the mediation and intercession of a righteous Person.

9. That there will be a day of future resurrection, judgment, and retribution to all mankind, vindicating the justice of God.

In these comprehensive doctrines we behold the germs of all that the subsequent dispensations were intended to develop ; and by contrast, or from incidental allusion, we may trace the leading errors already engrafted upon the pristine faith. The chief of these was that which taught that there were two independent, co-eternal principles, of good and evil, sometimes termed Light and Darkness. This was the leading tenet of the Magian apostacy, and

was very early received by the eastern nations. Its origin is usually attributed to Zoroaster ; but who he was, or at what period he lived, is a matter of extreme uncertainty. One Zoroaster is said to have been contemporay with Darius Hystaspes, others at all diversities of date, even to the amount of six thousand years before. One ancient author asserts that Zoroaster and Cush, the son of Ham, were the same person. If the explanation of Bryant be correct, the name belongs equally to the deity, the form of worship, and the chief priest. He writes it Zor-aster ; and says it means Sol-asterius, or simply, the Sun ; so that wherever the worship of the Sun prevailed, there might be found a Zoroaster. This would indicate that farther corruption of Magianism which gave rise to Zabaism, or the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars. The one, indeed, seems like the abstraction of metaphysical philosophy ; the other, its adaptation in a grosser form to less speculative minds. Both must have been known to Job ; and it may be remarked that he treats them in a different manner. The Magian opinion he refutes by a direct statement of the opposite doctrine. " With him (God) is strength and wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his." " By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens ; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." The exact correspondence of this with the language of Isaiah, illustrates and corroborates both. " I form the

light, and create darkness ; I make peace and create evil ; I the Lord (Jehovah) do all these things." Besides, by representing Satan, or the evil principle, as subject to God, permitted or restrained according to the pleasure of the Almighty, it is very plainly taught, that this evil principle, so far from being independent, is completely subordinate, and even his malice rendered productive of good. But he denounces Zabaism at once, as an offence to be punished by the judges, who being patriarchs were also priests, as an act of gross idolatry. Magianism seems to have been originally little more than a theory devised to account for the existence of evil in the universe, by the hypothesis of two independent and conflicting principles. These, besides their metaphysical appellations of Light and Darkness, were known by the names of Ormuzd and Ahriman, or, as the Greeks pronounced them, Oromasdes and Arimanius, the former the good, the latter the evil deity. This opinion obtained extensive credence among the imaginative Asiatics ; and even after the introduction of Christianity, it very soon gave rise to the heresy of Manicheism. Indeed almost all the earlier heresies that infested Christianity originated in the mystical speculations of the Magian or Gnostic philosophy.

From this abstract doctrine the declension to the more common form of Magianism, the worship of fire, was very easy, that element being the best symbolical representation of the good

principle, Light. The same process led with equal facility to the worship of sun, moon, and stars, all fountains of light, and therefore considered divine. One opinion held, that these heavenly bodies were not themselves divinities, but merely the residence, or perhaps the body, in which a divine intelligence dwelt, to whom worship was paid through the medium of his material abode. The same principle carried one step farther gave rise to the worship of images, as representatives of gods, and pervaded by a portion of divine influence. It wanted but one more refinement to be adapted to any purpose; and that it obtained from the craft of the Romish Church, whereby the worship of images and paintings was permitted to enter into and defile Christianity. This may suggest a melancholy reflection:—in the progress of human nature all that it knows or possesses of good is liable to perversion, gradually weakens, and at last would altogether disappear; while evil very early infuses its venom, acquires increasing strength, develops itself in new and more malignant forms, and would if unchecked by a superior power, triumph in the utter destruction of the race of man. From the metaphysical subtilty of two independent and conflicting principles flowed the worship of fire, and of the heavenly bodies; thence of material symbols of these bodies, together with the imaginative idea of many separate and subordinate intelligences, resident in the several depart-

ments of nature, as elemental spirits, or demons; thence veneration and an inferior degree of worship to the souls of departed heroes and great men; and thence to the grossest idolatry, fitly accompanied by the most degrading immorality and licentiousness.

The belief that the world is governed by the perpetual and superintending providence of God, seems to have given rise to conflicting opinions among the patriarchs. Job's friends seem to have thought, that his sufferings were a proof of some secret enormity on his part, of which they counselled him, with little tenderness or delicacy, to repent. He, on the other hand, asserts his innocence, and accounts for his sufferings by the hypothesis, that a good man may be brought into afflictions for the trial of his faith and patience; and that a time will come of perfect retribution, when the prosperity of the wicked and the sorrows of the good will meet their just recompense from the righteous Judge, at the latter day and in a future state. They believed in the continual interposition of a special Providence, visibly rendering to every man prosperity or adversity according to his conduct. He maintained the government of a general Providence, universally and specifically cognisant, but concealing its specialties in the present life, reserving its full development for another state of being, when the whole mysterious process should be closed and vindicated. From this it appears, that the purity of the patriarchal

faith was declining in the days of Job. It is not necessary that a man should be able to reconcile the doctrines of a general and a special providence, though he may continue to hold both : but if he hold that of a special providence only, and be compelled to see it very frequently violated by the adversity of the good and the prosperity of the bad, he is not far from denying both, unless withheld by a firm belief in a future state of retribution. But this was equally a matter of doubt to them, though fully entertained by him ; whence we may infer, that a general defection was on the point of taking place ; and perhaps that this eminent patriarch himself was the last by whom the pristine faith was held in all its original purity. This is another illustration of the manifold wisdom of God. Had the book of Job not been written, we should have been without a record of that primeval dispensation given to the patriarchs ;—had it been written earlier we might have learned what it was, but we should have been without the proof of human depravity furnished by its declension ;—and had it been delayed a century later, it would have reached us disfigured and falsified by numerous corruptions. It appears, moreover, that the life of Job was prolonged one hundred and forty years after his trial ; so that it extended so nearly to the birth of Abraham, that we may reasonably conclude, that the call of that latter patriarch, commencing a new dispensation, took place before the purity of the former was altogether gone.

It scarcely admits of a doubt, that the worship of departed heroes, founders of empires, and other distinguished men, was prevalent in many places, even before the days of Job. It was an early and a common custom of such men to pretend to hold peculiar and personal intercourse with some deity, for the purpose of thus obtaining greater influence over the ignorant and credulous multitude. In this Numa was by no means singular; and even Socrates had his demon. From this pretence to that of participating in divine nature, and thus becoming suitable objects of worship, was no remote or greatly forced deduction. This would most speedily take place in the followers of Nimrod, who had by their rebellion against Noah, violated both divine and human law, and were consequently at liberty to follow the headlong course of their own perverted will. They did not, however, for some time sink into the grossest idolatry, owing to the imaginative cast communicated to the common mind by their study of astronomy, and adoption of the Magian opinions. Yet it is pretty certain that Nimrod was worshipped under the name of the Sun, and with a combination of emblems and attributes appropriate at once to that luminary, and to his own character and exploits. But it was among the other branches of the Hamonian family that idolatry made the most rapid progress. This will be shown more fully when we come to treat of Egypt, their chief abode, from whence in after

times arose, in a more poetical and imaginative form, the celebrated mythology of Greece and Rome, so fair without, so putrid at the core, with all its fatal fascinations and destructive charms, its serpentine elegance, and its deadly sting.

There is yet another topic connected with the patriarchal age, to which we must briefly advert, chiefly for the purpose of attempting an explanation of a very obscure passage in Scripture. In returning from the defeat of the confederate kings Abraham was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God [e]. To this person he gave the tithe of the spoil, and received from him a solemn benediction, in his sacerdotal character. Even upon the face of this transaction it is evident that Melchizedek was the chief patriarch at that time alive, and combined in his person, as all the leading patriarchs did, the royal and the priestly dignities and functions. Before that period Noah was dead, Ham and Japhet had departed to their respective allotments, and of the chief patriarchs Shem alone could be of sufficient dignity and sacredness of character to correspond with the description given by the inspired historian. It may seem strange that Shem should have taken up his residence in obscurity at a distance from the chief abode of his descendants in Central Asia, and in a country at that time possessed by the race of Canaan, apostates from the faith, and plunged into the very depth of

pollution. For this various satisfactory reasons may be assigned. The title given to him is one indicative of character, King of peace. It was natural that such a person should withdraw from those regions where the followers of Nimrod and his own progeny were engaged in perpetual and deadly warfare. And to what land could he more properly betake himself than to that destined to be the abode of the chosen race, and the birthplace of the promised Redeemer? Of this there is reason to believe that the earliest patriarchs had received prophetic intimation; and that in the division of the earth reference was had to that foreseen event. To this prospective reservation of a select land for a chosen people allusion is probably made in the following passage. (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9.) "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance; when he separated the sons of Adam; he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel: for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." This being known to Shem, he retired to the promised land, where he dwelt in peaceful security, the eminent sanctity of his character being a sufficient protection from all violence. Another reason for the obscurity of his retirement may have been, his desire to avoid giving occasion in his own person to that idolatrous worship of the antediluvian patriarchs which was already becoming prevalent among their degenerate posterity. For this purpose

the place of his retreat, among the race of Ham, was singularly well adapted: for though they might respect him so far as to give him no molestation, they were not likely to carry to any culpable extent their veneration of one with whose descendants they were engaged in fierce hostility. To this it may be added, that whether arising from the residence of the patriarch, or from an indistinct acquaintance with some ancient prediction, an idea of peculiar sacredness was, from the most remote antiquity, and among nearly all the eastern nations, attached to the land of Judea, and particularly to Jerusalem, the Cadytis, or sacred city, of Herodotus.

It may readily be supposed that in this interview Shem would communicate much information to Abraham, respecting the truths and hopes of religion, though these have not been transmitted to us. It may have been partly in consequence of these communications, that Abraham repaired to mount Moriah, when afterwards commanded to offer up his son Isaac; and thus in that transaction he may have had a revelation both of the temple and its solemn worship, and of the one great sacrifice to be offered up, in the trial of his faith obtaining its reward, and being enabled even then to see the day of Jesus and to be glad. However that may be, in the account of Milchizedek, or Shem, we have one perfect example of that 'royal priesthood' which was the distinguishing characteristic of the ancient patriarchs, before their power had

merged in monarchy, and their sacred functions passed into the hands of a separate priestly caste; and in the book of Job we have their creed in the last days of its purity.

Into any statement respecting the farther degeneracy of the patriarchal age, especially in its priestly character, it does not appear necessary at present to enter, the subject belonging more properly to Egypt, in which it was permitted to develop itself fully, without the preventing or the biasing agency of external causes. So far, however, the course of events is both interesting and instructive. The channels by which the stream of human life flowed from its second fountain in Armenia, till it encompassed and overspread the world, have been pointed out and traced in their deepening and expanding progress. The pure faith of the patriarchs has been shown, as expressed in the majestic, yet unadorned language of the book of Job : and in the same faithful record we may perceive the dark traces of corruption effacing the noble lineaments of that earliest creed. It is melancholy to mark the plague-spot on the bosom of the human race so soon; but inexpressibly more so, to behold its increasing malignity, when having struck its envenomed fangs into the very heart of society, it propels the fatal taint through the whole structure, till it presents the miserable aspect of an almost lifeless and polluted mass festering into dissolution. This is the gloomy spectacle which henceforth awaits us, despite

the splendours of the historic page, which can but throw an idle luxuriancy around the scene of ruin, and spread its illusive mirage over the sands of the desert.

It is worthy of observation, also, that this process though sure, is steady and deliberate. In this it is like every thing conducted by the hand of Providence. The works of God do not exhibit that rushing urgency, that restless haste to reach the end,—by which those of man are characterized. They proceed in that slow, calm, majestic species of processional movement, indicative of infinite wisdom and irresistible power. Time is permitted for the gradual development of the full malignity of evil; slowly does civilization advance towards complete maturity; and let the inference be marked, with equally deliberate slowness will good extend its influence; nor till after the lapse of many ages, can it reasonably be expected that Christianity shall overspread the earth, and “the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Anointed.”

CHAPTER II.

EGYPT.

To trace out the history of Ancient Egypt has long been considered a task not less arduous than that of attempting to discover the sources of its own river, the Nile. It was evident to every person that the records furnished to the Greek historians by the Egyptian priesthood, were either entirely fabulous, or conveyed some mythic allegory, or perhaps astronomical cycle in symbollic language. What credit could ever seriously be given to such fables as the reign of the Sun for 30,000 years, of the twelve gods for 3984, and of the demigods for 217, before the reign of Menes, the first mortal king? The whole may be safely dismissed at once, as mere fiction, destitute of the least authority. At the same time it remains an incontestible truth, that the antiquity of Egypt may be traced to a period greatly more remote than that of any other nation. We find a regularly constituted monarchy, even in Lower Egypt, so early as the days of Abraham; and while the Asiatic empires of earliest date were about that time smitten back into something little superior to the nomadic form, Egypt continued to increase in

power and civilization, till it became, and for centuries continued to be, the mightiest kingdom on the earth. By what steps it attained that pitch of greatness, would be of itself an interesting historical problem : but it becomes doubly so, when viewed in its connection with the Hebrew patriarchs, as narrated in the sacred volume. The Bible, however, gives no account of the origin, or continuous history of Egypt, being restricted to those separate periods when it came into contact with the chosen race. It is plain, therefore, that the utmost we can expect from the Bible, with regard to the history of Egypt, is some aid in fixing synchronisms; and this, though no doubt a matter of very considerable difficulty, will be found not quite impracticable, and highly important.

It has been well remarked by Heeren, that in the accounts given by Herodotus, Diodorus, and Manetho, we have the records of the three chief seats of the priesthood: viz. those of Memphis by the first, of Thebes by the second, and of Heliopolis by the third of these historians. That they should disagree in many particulars, therefore, is only what might have been expected; but their points of coincidence sufficiently authenticate each other in events of a leading character. Neither Herodotus nor Diodorus seems to have intended to give a complete enumeration of the Egyptian kings, but only the most distinguished [*f*]. Indeed Herodotus states, that the priests read to him from a papy-

rus roll, 330 names of kings, subsequent to Menes, of whom they could give no farther account, "*because they had left no monuments behind them.*" From this it appears that the priests of Memphis drew their information from the inscriptions on public monuments; hence the value of those hieroglyphic inscriptions, the key to which has been so recently discovered by the celebrated Dr. Young.

The dynasties enumerated by Manetho, of which lists have been preserved by Eusebius and Syncellus, have received some corroboration so far as regards the succession of names, in certain dynasties, from the recent deciphering of monumental inscriptions; but little progress has been made in the removal of chronological difficulties. The fragments of Manetho, preserved by Josephus, are of considerable value, as will shortly appear.

In addition to these ancient authors, much light has been thrown on the history of Egypt by the researches of our modern travellers, historians, and men of learning; but without dwelling upon minutiae, or stopping to cite authorities at every step, we shall proceed with our attempt to sketch an outline of Egyptian history, laying before the reader in one consecutive view, what has been gleaned from many quarters, and reduced to some appearance of regular arrangement, not without considerable expenditure of time and pains.

In what precise period Egypt was first peopled,

it is impossible to specify with any degree of exactness. But admitting what has been already stated, that Africa was assigned by Noah to the race of Ham, we may conclude that with the exception of Nimrod, who led the Cushites into rebellion, and Canaan, who seized on Palestine, the majority of the Hamites would proceed to their destination soon after its specific appointment [g]. By a glance at the map it will be seen that there were only two routes by which it was practicable to reach Africa, setting out from Armenia: one through Syria and Palestine, along the Mediterranean, and into Egypt by the isthmus of Suez, or the region of the Delta. It may be doubted, however, whether that route was at that time practicable. Many ancient authors agree in representing the whole of Lower Egypt as originally a marsh, altogether uninhabitable, and even impassable. At the same time the desert of Arabia Petræa must have opposed an almost equally insurmountable obstacle. The other route would be, to follow the course of the Tigris and Euphrates to the Persian gulf, then skirt along the Arabian sea to the straits of Babelmandel, which they could cross with ease in a few hours. This would bring them into Nubia at once, and place them upon one of the branches of the Nile, along which they would extend their settlements as their numbers increased. The district of Meröe would therefore be the first in which the sons of Ham would obtain a fixed abode; and would

thus be the source of population, and at the same time the seat of the chief government, and consequently of civilization. The long contested question, whether civilization descended the Nile, has been recently settled in the affirmative, by proofs drawn from the remains of the most ancient monuments. This state of the fact is exactly what we should have expected, according to our view of the course of events. Every successive migration to a distance from the chief settlement, would, as has been already observed, necessarily cause the migrating body to recede, instead of advancing in civilization, so long as their progress was into an uninhabited and uncultivated land. It would, of course, follow, that while the original settlement in Meröe continued, however slowly, to advance in every species of mental culture, it would soon reach a considerable degree of eminence beyond that of its expanding colonies. When the valley of the Nile had become tolerably populous, the only migrations from the parent seat would be for the purpose of imparting instruction in those arts in which it had made some progress. Hence the fact, that in nearly all ancient authors Nubia, or Ethiopia, is mentioned in terms of the highest respect and admiration, as the origin of all the arts and sciences of civilized life, and even, with one distinguished exception, as the inventress of religious ceremonies. Perhaps it is not too extravagant a conjecture, that Ham himself remained at Meröe,

whence the celebrated Ammonium, the chief temple of the great Egyptian deity. It is probable that Mizraim, if that be a proper name, conducted the main body of the advancing colonists, and may have laid the foundation of the mighty Thebes, afterwards the seat of empire. Of all this early period, however, nothing remains, except what may be gleaned from obscure and mythological traditions.

The first sovereign, whose name is distinctly mentioned by all historians, is Menes: but at what period he began his reign it is impossible even to conjecture, so completely is the whole account overwhelmed by fables. He is said to have erected an embankment on the edge of the Nile, whereby the site of Memphis was secured from inundations, and the course of the river directed more into those main channels by which the rich soil of the Delta is included and fertilized,—may we not add, by which it was formed? This points him out naturally as the first Memphitic king, which accounts for his being so placed by Herodotus. But Diodorus intimates that he was an object of hostility to the Theban priests, and in the old Chronicle, preserved by Syncellus, it is worthy of observation, that the rulers of the country are divided into three classes, the first Demigods, the second Mizraim, the third Egyptians. Menes is placed at the head of the Mizraim; but a long interval elapses in which nothing but an imaginary series of dynasties, and a barren list of names is to be

found, to the amount according to Herodotus of 330. May not the account of Menes be thus explained? The race of Ham followed for some time the established custom of all other tribes, and retained the patriarchal form of government and order of succession. Their rulers were consequently priests, rather than kings, or might be called royal priests. Menes broke this order of succession, and assumed the sovereignty, not being at the same time the patriarchal priest, that is, the oldest person of the direct line. To this distinction probably the statement of Manetho alludes, by calling the previous priestly monarchs demigods; and the order begun by Menes, the dynasties of mortal sovereigns. His power was too great for the priests to resist, but not great enough altogether to set them at defiance; a compromise therefore may have taken place, and he, of the race of Mizraim, though not the direct head, was allowed to retain the regal power, leaving the priesthood possessed of all their other privileges, which were scarcely less than regal. About the same period, and perhaps from the same reason, may have begun the division of the people into castes, or at least an additional subdivision of those castes, into priestly, warriors, artisans, mariners, interpreters, and husbandmen, which last having been afterwards subdivided, formed the whole into seven.

The new order of affairs does not appear to have gone on altogether undisturbed, since it

is mentioned that the succession of Memphitic kings was interrupted by eighteen of Ethiopian origin, and one queen, probably an Ethiopian, that is Nubian, also, as we know that queens reigned frequently in Nubia, and also in Arabia Felix, the eastern Ethiopia, or land of Cush. This may indicate an attempt by the original settlement of Meröe to restore the patriarchal form of priestly sovereignty; but a change in the fortunes of the whole country was at hand.

Perhaps the most important event in the history of ancient Egypt, is the invasion of the Hyksos, as they are called by Manetho, in a very interesting passage cited by Josephus, explained to mean royal shepherds, or Shepherd-kings [*h*]. The incredible number of dynasties between Menes and the Shepherd-kings, who compose the fifteenth, has given rise to much discussion, and been variously explained. One hypothesis is, that they were contemporaneous dynasties, reigning in different cities, of which indeed they retained the distinctive appellations, and were called Thinite, Memphitic, Bubastic, etc. Another supposition is, that the Greeks were misled by the eastern mode of writing from right to left; and beginning at the wrong end, were told that what they called the *first* was in reality the *fifteenth*. They accordingly called it the fifteenth; but instead of making the next in that inverted order of succession the fourteenth, they went on increasing upwards, and thus obtained thirty dynasties, the true

number being only fifteen. This is the hypothesis of Bryant, and seems not improbable ; indeed he supports it with much learning, and no little sagacity, allowance being made for his attachment to his own favourite theory.

After an extensive and careful investigation of every accessible source of information, we have come to the conclusion that these Hyksos were the main body of the Cushites, who fled from Babylon upon the destruction of their impious tower, and the sudden confusion of their dialect. So far as etymology can be trusted, the name means *the high*, or *the noble Cushite*. They retained their pretensions to imperial dignity, but they had been so long without a residence that they had adopted the habits of nomads, hence the blending of their regal title and shepherd character. Between the destruction of Babel, and the arrival of the wandering Cushites in Egypt, a considerable period must have elapsed, sufficient to have allowed them to have collected together again in very great numbers, and become formidable even to a whole nation. We find them devastating Idumea in the time of Job, which both points out the path by which they found their way to Egypt, and coincides with other circumstances which tend to fix the date of their invasion rather more than a century before the birth of Abraham. The recently formed kingdom of Memphis was speedily subdued ; and the foreign race of sovereigns set themselves to secure their conquest. This they

endeavoured to accomplish by two different methods. They constructed a fortified encampment, called Avaris, on the eastern branch of the Nile, at the head of the Delta, in order to defend the pass by which they had themselves entered, being apprehensive lest the Assyrians should still pursue them with unsatiated vengeance. This, it may be remarked, in passing, corroborates the idea that they were the followers of Nimrod; for what other race of men had any cause to dread the peculiar hostility of the Assyrians? Their next method was to reduce the inhabitants to such a state of depression and slavery, as should incapacitate them from ever making a dangerous resistance. This they did by employing them in the construction of those mighty pyramids, which are still the wonder of the world.

The statement of the priests, that the pyramids were built by a shepherd, a contemner of the Gods, might be admitted as a direct proof, that the Hyksos were the builders of those prodigious fabrics, since they as Magians or Zabians were naturally hostile to idolatry, such as that of Egypt. Nor does it tend to discredit the supposition, that they had been recently engaged in erecting the tower of Babel, while it proves their possession of the requisite skill. The pyramids are also found to have an adaptation to certain astronomical uses; and this was exactly what Chaldean architects were most likely to give them, in their zeal for that study, and their

worship of the heavenly bodies. It may be observed, that while there are pyramids in the vicinity of Memphis, and at Meröe, there are none in the intermediate country. This also agrees with the hypothesis already given. Both were the work of the Cushites of Babylon; but as they did not acquire dominion at Meröe, their works are both fewer and smaller: while at Memphis where they ruled, the whole energies of the conquered nation have evidently been tasked to their utmost.

The dynasty of the Shepherd-kings lasted about 260 years. About the middle of that period Abraham entered Egypt, and was treated with respect and hospitality by the reigning monarch. It may be mentioned, that the name Pharaoh given to this king, is not a proper, but an appellative name, signifying *king*, according to Josephus, or *dignity and excellence*, according to Herodotus, or *the voice of Orus*, according to Bryant. It seems to be the same word as the Indian title of royalty, Porus, and may be equivalent to our compellation, HIGHNESS or MAJESTY, as applied to persons of regal dignity. It was perfectly natural that the Shepherd-kings should be hospitable to Abraham, whose condition so much resembled their own, except in its peaceful character, which was not likely to render it less agreeable.

After Abraham had returned to Canaan hostilities broke out between the tyrannous Hyksos and the oppressed Egyptians. This ended in

the expulsion of the invaders by the Theban dynasty, the enslaved Memphites having neither sufficient courage nor strength of themselves. This important event was begun by Alisphragmuthosis, and completed by his son Thumosis, or Amosis, the sixth and seventh kings of what is called the sixteenth Theban dynasty; from which this may be learned, that there must have been five of that dynasty reigning contemporaneously with the Hyksos, a proof that we are not to consider these dynasties as consecutive. Little more probably than one generation elapsed after the expulsion of the Hyksos, when Joseph was sold by his brethren to the Arabian caravan traders, carried into Egypt, and by the interposition of Providence, raised to the dignity of chief administrator of affairs under Pharaoh. As the priesthood had recovered their authority and influence we find the obstacle of their possible opposition to the elevation of Joseph removed by a matrimonial alliance between him and the daughter of the priest of On, or Heliopolis. Upon the occurrence of the predicted famine when the family of Jacob were brought into Egypt, we find Joseph expressing himself in a very remarkable manner, respecting the occupation and probable residence of his brethren. He anticipates their obtaining the land of Goshen, and directs them to state that they were shepherds,—“that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.” The detestation en-

tertained against shepherd tribes is very well accounted for, by the recent tyranny of the Shepherd-kings: and we may fairly conclude, that the land of Goshen was the very district in which these invaders had dwelt, and in which their chief strong hold Avaris was situated. It was at that time uninhabited; and having been the abode of the Shepherd-kings was most likely to be selected by Pharaoh for the residence of another shepherd tribe. To this it may be added, that the very name Goshen, bears a strong resemblance to Cushan, or the land of Cush, an appellation very suitable as applied to the Cushite followers of Nimrod, so recently expelled.

It is more than probable that the Hyksos upon their expulsion withdrew in two main channels. One went along the sea-coast of the Mediterranean, and formed settlements in that district called the country of the Philistines. The other retired into the desert tracts adjoining the Red sea in Arabia, and were afterwards known by the name of Amalekites. Their enmity against the Israelites may have sprung from various causes. The land of Goshen was that whence they had been expelled, and they could have little friendship for its new inhabitants. Besides, Josephus details a war of the Egyptians against the Ethiopians, (Cushites, or Arabians,) conducted by Moses, the circumstances of which, if not fabulous, would agree best with that part of Arabia where the Amalekites generally re-

sorted ; and the remembrance of this event may have caused their hostility to the Hebrews, because under the same dreaded leader.

The period during which the Israelites sojourned in Goshen is variously estimated ; some considering it to have been 430, others 215 years. If the former be adopted, then the generations between Levi and Moses seem to be mis-stated : if the latter, it is difficult to conceive that seventy persons could have increased to such a number as 600,000 males, "that drew the sword," besides women and children, in so short a period as 215 years. There is obviously some error in the numbers, either of years, or of people, probably the latter. Be that as it may, there seem to have been a succession of twelve kings, during which the Israelites resided in Egypt, inclusive of those in whom this residence began and ended. It is remarkable that the ninth of that inclusive list is called by Manetho, Sethon *Ægyptus*; and that both Syncellus and Eusebius make the same king the head of a new dynasty. The kings who expelled the shepherds were of the Theban race, or rather were Theban kings, and only lent their aid to their countrymen in expelling their barbarous invaders. The wise policy of Joseph consolidated the power of the country; and induced the Theban kings to reside partly at Memphis. But a revolution took place; and a new family ascended the throne, whose extraction was not derived from the royal race of Mizraim, but

from the more mixed people of Lower Egypt. On this account he was called by a name indicative of his origin. Is not this the "new king, who knew not Joseph?"—and who would have been likely to execrate his memory, as the friend of the Theban dynasty? An incidental remark of Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, deserves attention. The term Y-Gypt, in the language of the Nubians, means the land of canals,—a name remarkably appropriate to Lower Egypt in the state of civilization which it reached, when the whole district of the Delta was completely intersected with canals. These extensive and numerous works were most likely to be undertaken by one feeling the interest of a native in the country, and in possession of the large revenue which the political measures of Joseph had secured. Supposing the head of the new dynasty to be not only a native, but also a distinguished favourer of these national works, it was very natural that the same distinctive appellation should be conferred on him. But the prosecution of these great works required not only money and skill, but a numerous body of labourers. These the new king found in the race of Jacob, whom he compelled to labour incessantly, both because such a measure would serve to relieve the native Egyptians from excessive toil; and as a means of checking the rapid increase of the strangers, who were regarded with jealousy. It has been supposed that the Israelites were employed in the building of the pyramids. This is unlikely,

at least to any extent. They were compelled to make bricks, as we are told in the Bible ; but their buildings are expressly called cities, Pithom and Raamses, which latter name is common to several of the Egyptian kings. That they may have built some pyramidal structures is by no means improbable ; but when it is remembered that the Jews never attempted any similar fabrics in their own land, though prone to imitate the Egyptians, and had recourse to the assistance of the Tyrians in the building of Solomon's temple, it will appear more probable that their chief efforts were employed in the construction of canals, and the building of cities.

The events which took place previous to the departure of the Israelites are too well known to require specific mention. Under what king the Exodus happened is certainly a question of some importance, so far as regards chronology ; but at present it is one which cannot be accurately answered. If we take Diodorus for our guide, whose information was obtained from the priests of Thebes, we find twelve generations between Ægyptus and Mœris ; and seven between Mœris and Sesostris, without any specific mention of names or exploits, except the excavating, or enlarging of the lake Mœris, by the monarch of that name. This interrupted succession may be explained by the hypothesis of certain intermediate kings of a different race, of whom the Theban priests preserved the names of none but the most remarkable, such as Ægyptus, in

whom this Tanite dynasty commenced, and Moëris, by whom that magnificent work, the lake Moëris, was accomplished; and then passed on to the name of their own conquering sovereign, Osymandyas, Ramesses, or Sesostris, by all which names he is known. The number of twelve and of seven generations, however, cannot be admitted; but it may serve to indicate that the succession was not unbroken. The following may perhaps be regarded as not an improbable conjecture of what was the real course of events.

A Tanite dynasty arose under Sethon Ægyptus, who began to oppress the Israelites. Soon after this Moses was born and exposed, but preserved by the daughter of the king. Moses remained forty years at the court of Pharaoh, and as long in Arabia, which furnishes sufficient time for the death of two successive kings, and the accession of a third, thus completing the number of twelve already mentioned as having reigned while the Egyptian bondage continued. The obstinacy of Pharaoh drew down upon him repeated manifestations of Divine vengeance, and at last his whole army perished in the Red sea. These heavy calamities, and the loss of their slave population, so weakened the Tanite kingdom, that it was easily reduced to subjection by that of Thebes, and thus all Egypt was united under one race of powerful and enterprising monarchs. This was the commencement of the flourishing period of Egyptian history; during

which the mighty Sesostriſ rushed from the valley of the Nile, after having reduced it all to his ſole dominion, from the ſea to Merœe,—crossed the ſtraits of Babelmandel,—traversed Arabia Felix,—overran the countries on the Euphrates and Tigris,—aſcended theſe rivers, and continued his progreſſ northward, till checked by the Scythians,—left a colony at Colchis,—and returned to Egypt either by ſea, or through the maritime diſtricts of Paleſtine, having been abſent about nine years, and in that time ſubdued the greater part of both Africa and Aſia. The exploits of this great king have often been conſidered fabulous; but recent diſcoveries have eſtabliſhed their reality beyond a doubt. Bryant thought the whole a mythic mode of ſtating the migrations of the various deſcendants of Ham, eſpecially the Babylonian Cuſhites. This was certainly making too much of a theory. But it is worthy of notice, that the conquering courſe of Sesostriſ proceeds along the very path by which commerce and civilization had begun to link the moſt diſtant nations together with the ties of mutual intereſt. This may account for the identity of cuſtoms in places widely diſtant from each other, by which Bryant was miſled; and it explains the motive which induced the conqueror to direct his march in ſuch a manner as to follow the ſtream of wealth, draining it as he ſped onward his triumphant career.

It is no part of our intention to attempt to

fix chronological dates ; but as we are now approaching the borders of known history, it seems expedient to glance at the probable period of these events. The date of the Exodus is given by Usher 1491, by Calmet 1487, and by Hales 1648 before Christ. The Jewish date would make it at least a century later than any other. The latest date seems nearest the truth, for various reasons. The earlier dynasties of the Egyptian kings we set aside without hesitation, so far as regards the idea that they followed each other in regular succession. The dates of Hales are beyond all credibility ; and, in short, all attempts to fix these early dates are fruitless. But taking the medium the Exodus happened between 1500 and 1400 B. C. ; under a Tanite monarch of Lower Egypt, while one of the ancestors of Sesostris reigned in Thebes. The Delta soon after was subjugated by the Theban dynasty, which raised it to a great power, and gave rise to its foreign wars, under its chief hero Sesostris. On his return he is stated to have employed himself in improving the Delta by digging additional canals, and erecting other beneficial works. May the conjecture not be hazarded, that from these peaceful labours he obtained the cognomen of Sesostris, or Sethon, which had been that of the first Tanite king, also a constructor of canals ? It is well known that the Egyptian kings had several names each ; and while this increases the confusion, it may lessen the difficulty, when the

chief obstacle happens to consist in a difference of names.

The next question is, in what period of the Jewish annals did Sesostris flourish? And how is their silence respecting his conquests to be accounted for? It has been already suggested, that the Delta fell into the power of the Theban kings after the departure of the Israelites, under one of the predecessors of Sesostris. Forty years elapsed before the race of Jacob entered the Promised Land; and before that generation was altogether extinct they had fallen into servitude, from which they were rescued by Othniel. It is remarkable that this first servitude was under Cushan-rishathaim, king of Aram—Naharaim, Syria of the rivers, or Mesopotamia. The name of the place seems to point out an Assyrian, or Syrian monarchy. Now the monuments of Thebes agree with the histories of Sesostris, in representing some of his most distinguished victories as having been gained over an Asiatic kingdom on the banks of the Euphrates. This must have been after the servitude alluded to; otherwise there could have been no Assyrian kingdom powerful enough to extend its conquests to Judea. But we hear no more of the kings of Mesopotamia or Assyria for some centuries, which can only be accounted for by supposing that their power had been completely shattered by some intermediate disaster. This agrees perfectly with the supposition that soon after their repulse from Judea

they were overwhelmed in the triumphant career of Sesostriis, and so greatly weakened as not again to become formidable, till about the time of Pul, or his successor Tiglath-pileser. If we were to suppose that the conquests of Sesostriis took place about the time of the servitude under Jabin king of Hazor, and adopt the chronological dates of Hales, between 1426, and 1406, it would coincide in a very remarkable manner with the dates of the most intelligent investigators of the subject, as Dr. Young 1424, and Mr. Mure between 1410, and 1400. Champollion makes it 1473, which is clearly untenable. The utmost that can be obtained is an approximation to the truth; and we must be content if we can ascertain it within half a century.

No foreign conquests seem to have been attempted by the successors of Sesostriis for a very considerable time; nations, like individuals, seeming to sink into lassitude and inactivity after any great exertion. Probably the whole disposable population were employed for several hundred years, in erecting and adorning those mighty structures, pyramids, palaces, sphinxes, colossal statues, obelisks, canals, and subterranean excavations, which excite such ideas of the power and magnificence of ancient Egypt;—and which may serve equally well as illustrations of the wonders that may be achieved by human labour, and of the vanity of its prodigal waste. The sculptures on these public buildings appear to

be strictly historical, and to refer chiefly, if not solely, to the achievements of the mighty Theban dynasty, by whom Egypt was freed from invaders, and her own victorious arms borne over the greater part of the subjugated world. The various conquered nations are distinctly pointed out by the diversity of their dresses, weapons, and even complexion and features. Some of them are evidently Asiatics, advanced in civilization, and dwelling in towns; others are also Asiatic in appearance but of nomadic character, as is indicated by the flocks and herds, which constitute their captured wealth. These we should imagine to be the Hyksos. There is still another pastoral enemy, of ruder aspect, red-haired, fair-complexioned, and clad in skins. These have been supposed by certain learned men, to be the Shepherd-kings, especially as the sculptor has expressed his detestation of them, by every means within the compass of his art. We should rather conceive them to represent the Scythians, by whom the arms of Sesostris are said to have been foiled; and who consequently would be regarded with little favour by the national historian. This latter conjecture seems to agree well with the general scope of the history; and certainly removes some otherwise insuperable difficulties. If it should be ascertained that these skin-clad nomads are represented only on monuments of the latest Pharaohs, they may be the Scythians who invaded and overran all Upper Asia, and even reached Egypt in the

time of Psammetichus, till their incursions were bought off by that king. At any rate they could not be the Hyksos, who are stated by Manetho to have been Arabians,—more correctly Cushite Arabians.

At the head of what is called the twenty-second dynasty we find Sesonchosis, who has been identified with the Shishak, who pillaged Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam. This is of importance, as fixing the date of his reign to about the year 970, or 975, B. C.; and from this period we tread on sure ground, so far as regards international events. This monarch seems to have been the last conqueror of the Theban race. Soon afterwards the tide of conquest flowed down the Nile; and we find Sabaco the Ethiopian assuming the sway of the whole country, about 770, B. C. Next comes So, or Sevechus, also a Nubian, to whom Hosea sent an embassy; and then Taraco, or Tirhakah, against whom Sennacherib waged war, till his army perished by the judgment of God. These events shook the frame of things in Egypt, till the government was shattered into twelve parts, governed by as many independent princes. One of these, Psammetichus, by the assistance of Greek mercenaries subdued his rivals, and again united the empire, about 610. His son Necho attempted with considerable success to renew the glory of foreign conquests; but was finally defeated at Circesium or Carchemish, on the Euphrates, by Nebuchadnezzar, then general

for his father. Great attention was paid by Necho to commercial enterprise. He attempted to unite the Red sea and the Mediterranean by a canal, and his fleet accomplished the arduous undertaking of circumnavigating Africa, sailing from the straits of Babelmandel round the Cape of Good Hope, and returning by Gibraltar. Under Apries, (Pharaoh-Hophra,) the mercenaries rebelled, and their leader Amasis slew the unfortunate monarch, and usurped the throne. It was now evident that Egypt was about to lose its eminence among the nations, and sink back into a state of degradation. Its own warrior caste had migrated to Merœ during the reign of Psammetichus, being displeased with the employment of mercenaries. The nation was thus without a truly native defence, and was therefore incapable of resisting any formidable invader. At length, in the first year of Psammenitus, son of Amasis, the kingdom was invaded by Cambyses, its forces routed, its cities taken, the empire of the Pharaohs overthrown, and Egypt degraded into a Persian province. From that time to the present it has been a conquered country, domineered over by successive rulers of foreign extraction, but never again assuming the rank of an independent nation, under kings of native birth. It has been enslaved and trampled under foot by Persians, Grecians, Romans, Saracens, and Turks, crouching beneath the rod of each foreign despot in his turn, uncheered by even one brief interval of

freedom ; so completely has the prophetic denouncement been fulfilled, “ that it should be the basest of the kingdoms, and should never more be governed by a native Egyptian.”

It appeared necessary to enter with more minuteness into the ancient history of Egypt, and to treat it at greater length than the plan and scale of this work could well bear, both because of its own importance, and with a desire of removing part of the obscurity in which it has so long been involved. Hoping that this object has been in some measure accomplished, we now proceed with what is more intimately connected with our main design,—namely, the mind of the country, in its political, moral, and religious development.

The earliest political arrangement of Egypt appears to have been into nomes, or districts, distinguished from each other chiefly by their different objects of worship, and religious ceremonies. This is expressly mentioned by Herodotus, and is deserving of attention, as furnishing the most probable solution of the question respecting the origin of nomes. If the primary nomadic distinction consisted in the diversities of their forms of worship, it is plain that they must have been formed by the various settlements of the priestly caste ; who by erecting a temple, and instituting a peculiar ritual in honour of a local deity, established a rallying point for a new division of the wandering hordes, over which they became rulers, and a new appropria-

tion of the soil, of which they claimed one third, together with the superiority, or right of distribution. Let it be observed, that this perfectly agrees with what has already been stated respecting the patriarchal age. The first peopling of Egypt must have taken place when the patriarchal rules, though corrupted, were still dominant. Indeed the early history of Egypt and its primary institutions cannot be accounted for on any other hypothesis. The domination of the priest caste proves the prevalence of patriarchal usages, when the patriarch was both priest and king; the general similarity in their leading rites and chief deities, evinces a common origin; and the local differences, both in their disagreement and in their gross absurdities, as clearly manifest the degraded state into which patriarchal religion had sunk. That this early corruption should have first happened among the descendants of Ham is what we should have expected from the account of him and his race in the sacred volume: and the relapse into a state of greater barbarism consequent upon new colonization, allowed the patriarchal priest-and-ruler caste to form and arrange their schemes according to the dictates of their own selfish and crafty spirit. But their power was not wholly without a check. The successful rebellion of Nimrod furnished a precedent to bold and aspiring men, connected more or less closely with the priests, to resist or share their authority. This gave rise to the caste of warriors, from among whom

in consequence of a subsequent struggle between them and the priests, the king was chosen. Upon his elevation to the royal dignity he was initiated into the most solemn mysteries of the priestly order; and thus by a mutual compromise the regal and priestly offices were again united in the person of the king. This, at the same time, gave rise to the two noble castes of priests and warriors; and led the way to the subsequent division of the whole community into other distinct castes, of which there appear to have been five, or seven in all, viz. two noble, priests, and warriors; one of trading people, which caste is thought to have included both artificers and agriculturists; another of mariners, or rather people employed in inland navigation; two of herdsmen, both considered mean, and one despicable; and lastly, a caste of interpreters, formed towards the latter period of the Pharaohs, or native monarchs. It may be mentioned that in the enumeration of the different castes Herodotus and Diodorus do not agree, the former stating the whole number as seven, the latter only five; neither do they concur in their division of the inferior castes.

It is evident that this division of the people into castes, who were not allowed to intermingle, must have exerted a very marked influence upon the national character. It left in the possession of the priests the sole guidance of the national mind in religion, literature, science, and politics, together with a vast proportion of territorial

wealth. The power of the warrior caste, though great, was considerably inferior to that of the priests, because their intelligence was less. The remaining castes, being restricted to their several pursuits, must have speedily acquired considerable skill in those occupations, in the exercise of which their whole lives were spent. The manual dexterity acquired by this strict division of labour, accounts for the astonishing perfection to which the Egyptians carried certain arts; and at the same time explains their extreme deficiency, or utter ignorance of others. The national mind was broken into sections, each isolated from all others, and imprisoned within the narrow limits of a single subject. No cross lights were thrown from half-congenial faculties, exhibiting new points of view, and suggesting new capabilities; and thus what was gained in skill was lost in invention, and the extreme point of execution being reached, nothing could ensue but monotonous uniformity, sure omen and precursor of decline, itself the herald of gradual and final ruin.

The character and fate of this earliest political development of the human mind when left to itself, is not undeserving of notice. It arose out of the corruption of the patriarchal system, of which it continued to retain the elements; but no longer tempered by the unselfish love of a father. The priests, by retaining all religious and speculative knowledge exclusively in their own possession, rendered it impossible for the

other classes to advance in any other direction, or to any other extent, than they pleased; and by the farther division into castes, established just that degree of one-handed skill, and one-eyed intelligence, which should keep the nation trained to a degree of ready, powerful, and unreflecting obedience similar to what might be obtained from the combined movements of well-adjusted machinery. But this very scheme rendered a blended union of the whole impossible,—shut out general knowledge,—confirmed partial views, feelings, and interests,—exposed to disruption and dissolution, beyond the power of recovery,—and sunk the public mind to the lowest depths of the most degrading superstition. During the early period of the Egyptian monarchy the distinctions of castes would operate beneficially in promoting skill by concentrating effort and intelligence; nor would any detrimental effect be produced, till the increase of population began to approach the means of subsistence. But then it would be found in the highest degree injurious, binding men together in masses, helpless themselves, and incapable of helping each other. This position they did not reach till about the period of Sesostris and his successors. The enormous wealth which he had acquired by his course of conquests along the path of commerce enabled him to employ the surplus population in the erection and adorning of those vast edifices on which all subsequent ages have gazed with astonishment. The magnificent structures

of Memphis, Thebes, etc. must have furnished occupation to great numbers of men for several centuries, retarding the approach of the inevitable catastrophe, but at the same time confirming the fatal policy by which it was rendered irrecoverable. It may be remarked, that the method taken by Joseph to meet the effects of the seven years' famine, was productive of the most important consequences to Egypt. Before that time the king seems to have possessed little more than a nominal superiority over the land; sufficient to entitle him to demand a portion of the produce, while the real property belonged to the priests, the warriors, and the body of the people. By the policy of Joseph this nominal superiority was converted into real; the whole land, except that held by the priests, was transferred to the king, and restored to the people by a new tenure, which bound them to pay a fifth of the produce annually to the king. This arrangement occurring so soon after the expulsion of the Hyksos tended greatly to establish the distribution of property, the form of government, and the power of the monarch, on a firm and equitable foundation, and prepared the way for the glories of the Theban dynasty. It at the same time tended greatly to promote the public good; as the very existence of definite rights in the people must limit the despotic sway of the ruler.

The wealth amassed by Sesostris was not inexhaustible, even though a fifth part of the produce of rich Egypt continued to pour into the

royal treasury. But the distinction of castes prevented the almost innumerable multitudes of artificers from even attempting to find any other means of earning a subsistence; hence oppressive measures and exactions from the other castes, tending to the diffusion of suffering and the production of national poverty. One attempt was made by Sesonchosis (Shishak) to recruit the sinking fortunes of the empire by foreign conquests, though without any very permanent success. Ere long the combined progress of luxury and poverty reduced the energies of the nation so far, that the tributary kingdom of Meröe not only threw off the yoke, but even subdued the whole of Egypt, and threatened Asia. From that time the fate of Egypt was fixed and apparent. Its institutions could admit of no ameliorations, and they had become fatally diseased. Convulsion followed convulsion; the monarchy was torn asunder and a dodecarchy formed;—then reconstructed by foreign aid; the warrior caste emigrated in a body; the new mercenary troops made one effort for empire; failed, recoiled, and together with the nation were beaten prostrate by the mighty Chaldean. Another brief period of fallacious prosperity followed, during which commercial enterprise seemed to promise a renewal of their former wealth and eminence among the nations. But national crime had accomplished its work in producing national degradation. Egypt, like one of her own mummies, retained the erect posture of a living

thing, but life had forsaken the heart of the swart and rigid figure,—the fierce Persian struck but one blow, and she fell, to rise no more.

It may be remarked, in passing, that the high civilization of modern times, so far as it consists in the extreme skilfulness and manual dexterity required in all mechanical arts, produces somewhat of the same effect, and threatens similar results to those occasioned by the system of castes in Egypt. It takes the labour of almost half a life-time to acquire the requisite skill ; and should any sudden stagnation in trade throw the artisan out of employment, it is nearly impossible for him to turn himself to another occupation, even should he have it in his power,—his very skill in one art having, in many cases, operated to disqualify him from entering any other with success, as completely as if he had been prohibited by a peremptory law. This is an evil incident to an advanced state of society ; and it admits of no direct remedy. Every encouragement, however, and every facility should be given, to render the transfer of labour as easy as possible ; and on this account the law of parish settlements in England, which binds labour as much as possible to one spot, whether productive or not, is exceedingly injudicious. Strange, that England, in the nineteenth century should suffer under an impolitic measure so similar to that which contributed so greatly to the ruin of ancient Egypt about three thousand years ago !

Many of the Egyptian institutions were wise; judicious, and equitable in the highest degree. These they owed to the not yet forgotten laws and usages of the patriarchal age;—the corruptions were their own. The source of these corruptions may be fairly attributed to the close and blending connection between their religious and their civil polity,—to the influence of the powerful caste of the priesthood. The king himself was subject to the control of this hierarchy. Upon his access to the throne he was initiated into the mysteries, and obtained a priestly character. All public undertakings were regulated by reference to the priests, or the oracle. Without such reference no wars could be undertaken, and conquest was celebrated by religious processions, sacrifices, and presents to the temples. The priests were the keepers of all public and historical records; and these were generally delineated on the walls of their temples, or on the obelisks, etc., by which these sacred places were adorned, both in sculpture and painting of surpassing beauty, spirit, and grandeur. From these some conjecture may be formed of the extraordinary attention which must have been given to those arts, and which nothing but the exclusive tendency of castes could have rendered possible in that early age. Scarcely any subject is represented but those of war and religion; so that in this respect also the restrictive spirit of the priesthood appears.

Not only science and art, but literature also,

if the word may be appropriately used with reference to Egypt, felt the blight of the same hierocratic influence. The priest caste were the sole custodiers of all public records; and under their direction alone were all those hieroglyphic inscriptions formed, of which learned men have only recently discovered the alphabet. This must have greatly retarded the progress of knowledge, under any circumstances; but when the custodiers were themselves corrupt, and thought it for their interest to keep the body of the people in ignorance, that their superstition might be the more blind and slavish, nothing could more effectually tend to the production of national degeneracy. To explain the nature of hieroglyphic writing scarcely falls within our plan, and to do it fully would exceed our limits; yet a brief sketch may not be quite unnecessary.

The origin of all writing must unquestionably have been the attempt to represent by pictures the information intended to be communicated. This picture-writing appears to have been universal in the youth of nations, as we find it, or something closely analogous, wherever man has made little progress in civilization, as among the Mexicans, when first visited by the Spaniards. As knowledge increased this would be found cumbrous and inconvenient; and abbreviations and combinations would follow, each figure continuing to represent an idea or object. This is the stage at which the progress of Chinese im-

provement stopped short. A third improvement consists in using figures to indicate sounds, in which case these figures are said to be *phonetic*. To this position the greater civilization of the Egyptians carried them; but left one step still unaccomplished, in the production of a complete alphabet. They continued to use figures of real objects, so selected that the initial sounds of their names should compose the sounds of the word thus half-painted, half-spelled. This caused the symbolical meaning of the figures to be still in part retained; and this enabled the priests to throw what obscurity they pleased over that knowledge of which they were exclusively in possession. The common style of writing became more simple and arbitrary, by being composed of abbreviated forms, and was called the *demotic*; that used chiefly by the priests, but generally understood, *hieratic*; and that employed in more solemn matters, especially in things relating to religion, *hieroglyphic*, of which the priests alone understood the full meaning. The consequence of this state of limited intelligence appeared in a remarkable manner.

Picture-writing is of necessity symbolical, whenever ideas, not objects, are to be represented [2]. Qualities and attributes could be represented only by delineations of the plants or animals supposed to possess them in a peculiar manner. All religious ideas must of course have become entirely symbolical, so far

as regarded the attributes ascribed to the deity. Without instituting a minute enquiry into the mythology of ancient Egypt, from which our limits preclude us, it may be mentioned that the chief objects of Egyptian worship were Ammon and his kindred, or descendant gods ; and that many of their rites are referable, with sufficient clearness, to the story of the deluge,—of the preservation of certain persons in an ark, which was carried annually in solemn procession across the Nile at Thebes,—and of other leading events in the period immediately subsequent to the flood. Ham having by his misconduct incurred the displeasure of his father, was in no degree inclined to render him peculiar honour ; and accordingly we find himself, and his own actions and attributes, the chief objects set forth in the idolatrous rites of his descendants. His original pastoral employment is indicated by the horns, or entire head of a ram, which was his distinctive symbol. The subsequent encouragement given to agriculture occasioned the symbolical use of the bull, or ox, an animal so useful in the rude labours of early ages. In like manner other animals, and plants also, as the lotus, etc. became the appropriate symbols of peculiar attributes, which again were subdivided into peculiar deities, and distributed severally among different nomes and districts. But this esoteric meaning of these symbols was beyond the reach of the common people ; and thus the symbol itself became the object of adoration. From the sym-

bolical image to the living animal represented was the next step of human degeneracy,—from the ignorant veneration of their own pictorial mode of writing, to the worship of brutes, plants, and noxious reptiles [*k*]. Such is man, when his own wisdom is his only guide,—when throwing off the salutary restraint of laws and authorities appointed by God, he assumes the government of himself, devises deities after his own mind, and rushes blindly along that downward path, which terminates in destruction.

It has been urged as an objection against the Divine origin of the Mosaic institutions, that they bear in many things a very striking resemblance to those of the Egyptians. The force of this objection has been overrated, and at the same time the true answer to it overlooked. Instead of attempting to prove that the Egyptians borrowed these institutions from the Jews, —a supposition to the last degree improbable,—the proper mode of reply is, to point out the source whence both were derived, where they agree, and the cause of the diversity where they are opposed. By reference to the account of the Patriarchal age it will be seen that there existed a comprehensive code of religious belief, moral standards, and political regulations, common to all of that early and simple period. Now as these patriarchal institutions must have been appointed chiefly by Noah, not without Divine direction, whatever of them were retained by the race of Ham, might with perfect pro-

priety be retained by the descendants of Abraham also. But as the Egyptians had corrupted these rites, perverted their application, or lost the true account of their origin and purport: they were reinstituted by Moses, with such explanations as served to guard against those errors into which that superstitious people had fallen, with all whose observances he was well acquainted, and in all whose wisdom he was deeply learned. On the other hand some of the particulars of the Mosaic law are evidently directed against the Egyptian corruptions. The idolatry of the Egyptians had arisen chiefly from their use of picture-writing, in its various aspects, especially the symbolical representation of attributes ascribed to the deity. The Israelites were therefore strictly prohibited from the use of any such symbolical characters,—from making “any likeness of any thing in heaven or earth, or in the waters under the earth.” And to remove the leading cause, the last improvement was given to their alphabet, by which a set of arbitrary signs were made to represent sounds, without reference to symbolical form or meaning. It would appear that the Hebrews had previously used either the phonetic hieroglyph of the Egyptians, or one very similar, since the name of each letter is also the name of a plant or animal, which, however, it has ceased to resemble. This change probably took place at the giving of the law from mount Sinai, and may have been effected

in consequence of Divine appointment. It is difficult to suppose that the Egyptians would not have adopted the invention had it been used by the Hebrews before their Exodus; unless indeed the priests had resisted the innovation as likely to endanger their craft. Cadmus, who introduced letters into Greece about 85 years after the Exodus, was a Phœnician; and very probably acquired the knowledge of them from casual intercourse with the Jews. At all events the use of an alphabet composed of arbitrary characters, was excellently calculated for removing the tendency of picture-writing to lead an ignorant people into gross idolatry by its symbolical representations; and originating, as it did, among a race not distinguished for inventive powers, we think it may be rightfully ascribed to the direct interposition of God, in pity for the erring blindness of his fallen and self-destroying creature.

In taking a glance at the political, moral, and religious development of Egypt, it will easily be found that the whole can be resolved into a very few leading principles. These were such as necessarily resulted from the strong predominance of the patriarchal system perverted and misapplied, in consequence of the perversion of religion, by which alone it could be kept in purity and strength. But it is worthy of observation, that Egypt was by nature peculiarly adapted to the making of an experiment upon the patriarchal system in the fairest and fullest manner

possible. Possessing in its rich soil, and its fertilizing river, ample means of maintaining a numerous population without the necessity of much intercourse with other nations; and divided by seas and deserts from nearly all the world beside, it was placed in circumstances admirably adapted to allow the unbiassed development to the fullest extent, of those principles from which its peculiar institutions and national character germinated. We are not only justified, therefore, but called upon, to pay particular attention to the result. The history of Egypt, in fact, presents almost that of the world in an abridged form. We see a few nomadic hordes, each led by their patriarchal emir, at once priest and king, and all owing respectful veneration, if not allegiance, to the chief patriarch, the primary stem of the race. That chief introduces errors into their religious belief and observances, which are immediately carried to a wider extent and deeper degree of corruption by the subordinate priestly rulers. They in a short time form themselves into a separate caste, assuming the character of superior sanctity, for the better maintenance of their power. The strong and warlike of the tribes claim and obtain a participation in this power; but the priesthood preserve their ascendancy by retaining the key of knowledge in their own possession. This locks up the national intelligence, and precludes the possibility of advancement beyond what the priesthood may think expedient or advantageous for themselves.

The division of the whole population into castes enables them to separate the otherwise uncontrollable activity and strength of the national mind into such portions as may be individually biassed, while their strict isolation renders their combination for any dangerous purpose impossible; and even their knowledge and skill in particular subjects serve to confirm their ignorance in those of a general and comprehensive nature. This renders it impracticable for improvement to advance beyond a certain limit; and as there is no such thing as a stationary point in mortal and material things, whatever cannot advance must recede. Then begins the process of dissolution. The poison of false religion, which has so long lain festering in the heart of society, and gradually diffusing its venom through all the members of the body politic, begins to display its destructive virulence; part after part is seen to bear the plague-spot; vitality stagnates throughout the bloated frame; and after a few convulsive struggles, the lifeless bulk lies cumbering the ground where formerly it shone and ruled in loftiest state and proudest majesty.

The wisdom and scientific skill of the Egyptians have been greatly overrated. Every thing Egyptian may be characterized by absence of combination in means, and simplicity of intention. Their architectural works display the same barrenness of invention or combination. The method of forming an arch was unknown

to them. To strike a solemn awe into the mind by erecting works of overwhelming magnitude, seems to have been their main intention; and to produce this effect they spared no expenditure of time and labour. Time, indeed, seems not to have been taken into the calculation; for whole centuries must have elapsed before the completion of their magnificent palaces and temples. This would not have been possible but for the permanent influence of the priest caste, whose object was always the same,—to perpetuate their own power whatever might be the state of the nation. In sculpture they attained considerable skill, it being an important object to transmit their historical records by means of sculptured representations. These being carved on columns and public buildings served at once for use and ornament; and remain to this day to testify the power, the wealth, and the tyranny of Egypt's mighty Pharaohs. But this very skill in sculptural embellishments tended to prolong the method of symbolical writing even when the phonetic had become prevalent; and thus led to brute-worship, in consequence of its connection with the sacred language known only to the priests.

They do not appear to have used more than four simple colours, yellow, red, blue, and green, and not to have practised the art of mixing them so as to produce diversity of tint. Yet these colours retain a great degree of brilliancy, though now not less than three thousand years

have tried their permanence. That they must have even by accident, mixed their colours occasionally, we cannot but believe ; but we think this singular pause of improvement may be accounted for on the following hypothesis ;—each of their chief deities having a colour appropriated peculiarly to himself, it would have been considered offensive to the god to have confused it by intermixture with any other. Thus the restrictive fetters of their baleful superstition enthralled the efforts of even that beautiful art.

Even the subtle spirit of commerce was unable to pierce the dense masses,—compact of habit, ignorance, and prejudice,—into which the nation was divided. Every caste and every nome, settled inwards upon its own centre ; and if they did obey the *primum mobile* of a Diospolite, or Memphitic dynasty, still they kept their separate spheres, manifesting little intercommunity of motion but what resulted from their common subjection to the controlling influence of one despotic momentum. In a very early age an interchange of commodities took place between India and Egypt ; and as commerce extended its influence and its efforts to other nations farther west, Egypt became the general mart where traders from all nations met. Thither the Indian repaired with his spices, the Arabian with incense, the Nubian and western African with gold and ivory, the Phœnician with wine, and the native of the desert with salt. In exchange for what she required of

these commodities Egypt gave the surplus produce of her fertile soil, and the elegant labours of her loom,—that is, for the luxuries of life she gave its first necessities, food and clothing. Hence she could always command the market, her commodities possessing intrinsic, theirs only conventional, value. For the same reason, while other nations brought their goods to her, it was not necessary for her traders to leave their own homes in search of purchasers. The Arab tribes, from their wandering habits, were well adapted to excel in the carrying trade; and accordingly we find that they obtained of it an almost entire monopoly. So early as the days of Joseph we meet with a caravan of Ishmaelites proceeding to Egypt with spices, by whom he was carried thither.

The caravan trade becoming extensive, the most convenient resting stations, and especially the various points of convergence where many met, were not long in acquiring permanent importance; and each very soon became the seat of a temple, perhaps an oracle, a new source of wealth to the politic and crafty priesthood. In corroboration of this statement it may be mentioned, that Burkhardt describes a small state, called Damer, almost on the very site of ancient Meröe, governed by a sacerdotal ruler, possessing a sanctuary, and frequented by caravans, as a resting and trading station. We have in it a specimen of the method by which settlements, and eventually nations, were formed under the

blended influence of priests and traders. This tended to restrict the articles of traffic, and thus again was the field of human enterprise circumscribed and modified by the same cramping influence. In one point, however, it was beneficial. Temples and other solid structures were erected, which have survived the wasting touch of time, beneath which the less stable traces of the caravans have long since sunk and disappeared. By these mouldering remains we are guided along the path whereon the ancient world moved in pursuit of wealth and refinement; and can mark the corresponding steps of commerce and civilization; from which we learn the fact, that they advanced along the same lines and with equal progress and united effort. This is admirably illustrated by Heeren, to whose work we refer, and proceed with other topics.

Considerable advances were made in both geometry and astronomy. The former, being reduced to practical uses was productive of national advantage; but the latter experienced the same pestiferous influence of a false religion, by which every political, moral, or mental principle was poisoned in its very essence. It was probably introduced in a great measure by the dispersed Cushites, at first in their separate wanderings, and afterwards when under the name Hyksos they seized upon Lower Egypt. They, being worshippers of the heavenly bodies, were naturally prone to astronomy; and attempted to establish their own belief and mode of worship.

The angles of the pyramids present a strict uniformity in astronomical bearing ; and certain inscriptions on some very ancient obelisks are called by Cassiodorus, *Chaldaica signa*, indicating the people from whom they had been received. Upon their expulsion the native priesthood retained a portion of their knowledge, but concealed it in language of studied symbolical obscurity, giving it the appearance of having reference to the gods of the country ; so that it only served to deepen the superstitious gloom, by which the mind of man was kept from beholding and adoring the gracious light shed from the countenance of the only living and true God. Being connected with astrology also, it formed an admirable engine in the hands of the priest caste, for the increase and perpetuation of their despotic influence, enabling them to domineer over even their kings. In every department of the national mind, political, philosophical or scientific, and moral, the same evil influence was present, to corrupt and to destroy. The same paralyzing touch laid its deadly spell on the whole collective energies of the kingdom ; till withered and benumbed it sunk into a state of torpid apathy, exanimated, swathed up in chill observances, and impressed with the fated hieroglyphic seal, like one of its own mummies, a very mockery of life.

In what was already stated respecting the development of the general mind in the patriarchal age, certain topics were mentioned which belong

equally to the history of Egypt. Indeed such could not but be the case, every age receiving a strong impress and bias from its predecessor, adding what it can of its own, and transmitting the whole to that which follows. The patriarchal times were indeed the youth of the world. Full of untried energies, and untutored, indomitable will, they formed all their undertakings upon the basis of a few simple elementary principles, and executed them on a scale of gigantic magnitude. The same was the case in Egypt. The wonderful sepulchral or labyrinthine excavations ;—the artificial lakes emulous of seas ; the temples and palaces encrusted over with hieroglyphics, the work of centuries ; the pyramids, rivalling mountains in magnitude and durability ;—all declare a nation prodigal of labour, fertile in resources, of unswerving perseverance in its purposes, guided and impelled by despotic power, filled with an indefinite longing after immortality of existence even as mummies, or by transmigration, and ennobled by the embodied presence of conceptions unequalled in stern majestic grandeur, and simple yet severely solemn magnificence. And what was the ultimate result ? The combined tyranny and superstition introduced by the perversion of the patriarchal system and the corruption of religion, produced their genuine progeny,—slavery and immorality. These twin cancerous evils shot their fangs through every member of society, and thrust them to its very core. A moral blight overspread the whole country,

sunk down on every caste and section, and infused its "leprous distillment" into every individual, from the throne and the temple, to the cavern, the hut, and the floating raft. Then died the principle of national vitality; for without at least some approach to true religion and pure morality a nation cannot live,—its central and assimilating principle being destroyed, disorganization, anarchy, and ruin must ensue. From such a condition there is no recovery. This melancholy truth Egypt still attests. She fell—to rise no more; and her degraded population creep in slavish degeneracy among the fragments of those stupendous fabrics built by their mighty fathers; without imbibing one feeling of generous admiration, without rising to the dignity of one thrill of noble desire once more to rouse their dormant energies, and emulate their former glories.

Thus it was proved, that the simplest and noblest system may become the most oppressive, and end in producing the utmost degeneracy. There could be no superior authority of ultimate appeal, by which the power of the patriarchal sovereign could be modified, but religion. But a false religion, administered by a corrupt and designing priesthood, could only render the evil more malignant. From the history and the fate of Egypt the world was, or might have been, taught, the danger of irresponsible power in the hands of any class of men; the tendency of such power to injure others and end in destroying it-

self; and especially the fatal consequences of so mixing up religion and politics, that the former shall be degraded into the unseemly and injurious position of becoming a mere engine of state.

The effect of division of labour, concentrated attention, and combined effort, was most largely and impressively taught. Even science experienced considerable advancement from the same process, and manual skill reached in some particulars, a degree of extreme excellence. The laws regulating the distribution and possession of property were also brought to great perfection; and even the courts of justice were conducted with very strict adherence to the principles of rectitude. Considerable advancement was thus made in civilization, which was partly communicated to neighbouring nations, by their common intercourse, partly explored by inquisitive visitors, such as the travellers and philosophers of Greece, and thus became the heritage of other countries and succeeding times, when other lands had become the scene of those leading events which form the annals of the world.

When, however, the experiment had been completed, and it had been shown on a scale of amplest magnitude, that no political, intellectual, or religious principles yet in action could effect the moral regeneration of man,—nay, that all tended only to produce a deeper degradation, and to cause their own dissolution,—then it pleased the All-wise Ruler of the universe to prepare for a further development of human na-

ture, and a new trial of its capabilities under altered circumstances. But the light of the earliest, the patriarchal, revelation being on the point of extinction, one nation was selected to be a permanent witness for the truth,—its depositaries and guardians, when all else should sink into error. For this purpose it seemed necessary that the chosen people should be marked off by such peculiarities as should establish a permanent distinction between it and all others. After leaving Egypt, and experiencing a miraculous deliverance from their former oppressor, by their passage of the Red sea, in which the pursuing army was overwhelmed; they were led by Moses into the wilderness, and from the summit of mount Sinai received a system of laws, proclaimed by God himself, their Deliverer and their King, amid circumstances of the most terrific grandeur and sublimity. The fundamental principle of this Divine legislation was the express statement of the unity of the Godhead in Jehovah, consequently His exclusive right to worship. And as the proneness of the human mind to sink into the depth of idolatry, owing to the superior influence possessed by sensible objects over a nature now under thralldom to the law of the senses, had become deplorably evident, the Hebrews were strictly prohibited from the use of any symbolical representation of the Deity. This alone would have constituted a striking difference between them and other nations, who were universally idol-

aters. To make this distinction equally strong and permanent its spirit was infused into their political institutions; so that their God being also their King, idolatry, or the worship of any other god, was also treason, and consequently punished by death, when committed by individuals. As a national crime it was rebellion; and the punishment threatened was subjugation and captivity by a foreign enemy. This, of course, involved the idea of a special Providence, directly superintending the affairs of the Jews, and assigning to them prosperity or adversity according to their obedience or disobedience to the Divine law. This was a political peculiarity to which it was absolutely impossible that any other nation could present any thing at all similar. From this results another peculiarity, of which a little additional notice may be taken.

The maintenance of a system of public morals is essential to the welfare of society. But there are many immoralities, and kinds of delinquency of which common law cannot take cognisance, because not yet reduced to overt evil actions; and which yet it is extremely desirable to keep in check. The dread of punishment in a future state of existence on account of criminal intentions by which the soul was stained, seems the only method capable of reaching such cases of internal criminality. This involves belief in the immortality of the soul, and in the doctrine that its condition hereafter will be modified by its conduct in this life. The patriarchs, we have

already seen, held this doctrine very distinctly. But in the corruption of the patriarchal tenets, though retained because of its importance to civil society, it was moulded into the most fantastic figures, conveyed under the guise of the most extravagant fables, or concealed beneath the most subtle mythic allusions. In India and in Egypt it assumed the metaphysical garb of the transmigration of souls through a succession of bodies, during a cycle of years, of which three thousand seems to have been generally stated as the amount. This was the tenet of the priests and higher classes ; but the common people seem to have entertained the grosser idea, that the existence of the soul depended in some manner upon the preservation of the body. From this in all probability originated the practice of embalmment ; and the extreme labour expended on the formation of tombs, which were generally excavations hewn out of the solid rock, except where natural caves furnished a commencement, to be greatly enlarged. To such a degree was the doctrine of a future life and its rewards and punishments carried among the Egyptians, that they had a process of solemn trial of the dead, before the usual rites of sepulture could be administered. This furnished a very efficient engine under the management of the legislature, especially when that legislature was composed of the priesthood, for the prevention of moral guilt, to which no merely civil institution could have reached.

The purity of public morals among the Hebrews was enforced by no such promises or threats. Immediate punishment, in this life, was denounced as the sure consequence of crime, individual or national. This, it is obvious, rendered the very idea of imposture in Moses impossible, because it made detection inevitable and speedy, unless the whole arrangement was indeed that which it was assumed to be,—given and conducted under the immediate and special superintendence of God. The immortality of the soul, and the nature of the life to come, were therefore topics not necessarily involved in the new law given to the Israelites; they are consequently left without express mention, in the condition of obscurity into which they had sunk since the times of the patriarchs. That the immortality of the soul was believed by the majority of the nation might easily be proved; and its absence from the sanctions of the Sinaitic law is perfectly accountable on the grounds just mentioned. It was indeed another of those distinctive points by which God was pleased to separate the Jews from all nations to be a peculiar people to himself. From that time forward the history of man presents a twofold aspect. The whole Gentile world forgot the God of their fathers, and were ignorant that the Most High ruled in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. Kings, rulers, priests, and sages alike followed their own way,—fought, go-

verned, deluded, and philosophized, without being aware that all their actions were overruled into a direct subserviency to the will of Jehovah, and for the fulfillment of His pre-terminate counsel. To preserve the knowledge of Himself in the world, and to furnish, as it were, a glimpse into the nature of that secret scheme by which He governs all things, He appropriated one small corner of the world as his own inheritance, and consigned it to a chosen race, over whom He condescended to rule with special and visible sway,—rewarding virtue and punishing vice in the specimen, as He would have it to be known that they shall be rewarded or punished hereafter in the mass.

In all other nations some form of religion has been established ; but upon a principle diametrically opposite. In them it has always been employed merely or chiefly as a means of strengthening and perpetuating the civil government ; in the Hebrew commonwealth, rightly termed a theocracy, the preservation of true religion was the *end*, the form and maintenance of the civil constitution only the *means* of attaining that end. This very striking difference in purpose furnishes a complete explanation of the opposite results produced by the priesthood of Egypt and that of Judea, notwithstanding their apparent similarity ; and at the same time vindicates the establishment of the latter from any aspersions sought to be thrown upon it because of its resemblance to the former. The

object of the Egyptian priest caste was to secure the possession of all power to themselves, and for this purpose to begin by establishing a strict monopoly of all kinds of knowledge, and keeping the mass of the people in ignorance to ensure their blind obedience. The object of the Levitical establishment, on the other hand, was to promote knowledge to the utmost possible extent, based upon pure principles, and guided by direct reference to the will of God. Their object was not the concealment but the diffusion of refinement and civilization; and instead of veiling the knowledge of the law in mysteries, it was their express duty to expound and inculcate it in the most public manner. The Egyptian priesthood, as the descendants and inheritors of the patriarchal system, held their dignity, sacred office, and even secular power and wealth, as their birthright: the Levitical were sprung from a junior branch, had no natural right to their office, and in being appointed to it by their heavenly King were at the same time bereft of their portion in the division of the land. Differing in so many important points from the Egyptian priest caste they were placed in circumstances to accomplish all the advantages, in a national point of view, which could spring from the existence of an appointed body for teaching divine truth, a literary nobility to discharge important functions of state and counterpoise the landed aristocracy, and a widely diffused class of instructors, qualified

to promote at once intellectual, moral, and religious improvement.

The government of Egypt, in short, by the corruption of the patriarchal system, became a hierocratic despotism; and the whole kingdom sunk to the lowest depth of superstitious degradation, as will always be the case where a corrupt priesthood obtains irresponsible domination. That this still happens is but too plainly apparent in the character and condition of those European nations where the Romish perversion of Christianity holds its baleful supremacy. Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Ireland, testify the evils of a political priesthood; and even in England the unhallowed leaven works to the injury alike of Church and people, as it ever must when religion is in any measure degraded into the condition of a mere state engine. But this point is not yet fully before us; and we proceed, with one closing remark, to follow the path of history. Though the patriarchal system had been thus weighed in the balance and found wanting, the capabilities of mankind were still in their infancy. Other powers were also to be put to the proof. The Jews were accordingly set apart for a specific purpose, and completely hedged in by particular laws and ritual observances, of the full import of which they were not themselves aware; while the rest of the world was allowed to follow its natural bent, and try the effect of new combinations, formed and de-

veloped under different circumstances, that its resources being exhausted, it might at last discover that its own wisdom was folly and its own strength weakness.

CHAPTER III.

ASSYRIA AND BABYLON.

SCARCELY less obscurity involves the early history of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires, than that in which the ancient annals of Egypt are wrapt. Yet from the position they occupy on the grand arena of the world, it is of importance to obtain somewhat of a clear view of such leading events in their history as may tend to elucidate the nature of the share which they bore in the development of the character and condition of mankind. It is necessary, however, to reject at once the fabulous narratives which the Greek historians give, and which have been collected and arranged by Rollin, with the most amusing credulity. In no point more than in historical traditions are the Greeks to be distrusted, because of their strong love of the marvellous; and in none of their histories are they less worthy of credit than in what they have written concerning the ancient eastern empires. Unacquainted with the language of these nations, and still more unskilled in the peculiarities of oriental genius, they were altogether incapable of distinguishing between mythic legends and historical narratives. An-

other source of error consisted in the custom of the eastern nations of naming a city from the deity principally worshipped there, and the people and even the king from the city. Hence the wars of the nation, or even the progress of the national religion, were often misrepresented as the exploits of an individual monarch. Thus the actions of the Ninevite, or of Nineveh collectively, are ascribed to a conquering sovereign, Ninus, by whom the town is said to have been built; though we have the authority of the Bible that it was built by Ashur, after his expulsion out of the land of Shinar by the usurper Nimrod. Again, we have the wonderful achievements of Semiramis detailed with all due precision, in spite of their utter incredibility, or rather impossibility. It is almost surprising that even the Greeks did not perceive from the mixture of the mythic in every thing respecting Semiramis, that the whole was symbolical. She was nourished in her infancy by doves,—she invented the first ship,—her standard was a dove,—she was changed at length into a dove, and worshipped under that emblem. All this points most clearly to the history of Noah, as appears from the ship and the dove; and the people who worshipped the patriarch under these symbols, were rightly entitled Semarim—from Sema-Rama, the *high sign*, or *divine token*, which they not only worshipped, but used as a military standard. Hence also their whole course of conquest, though involving a long

series of events, continued through a considerable portion of time, came to be attributed all to the same mythic personage Semiramis. This was the more likely from the fact that a queen of distinguished ability, did in after times reign, or at least take a leading part in the administration of affairs in Babylon. But the limits of the present work will not permit the full detection of the errors by which the Assyrian and Babylonian histories are disfigured: it may be enough to offer an outline of what really did happen, collected from the most authentic and authoritative sources, and leave it unclogged by a cumbrous array of proofs, to work its way to conviction from the mere effect of its greater simplicity, and truthfulness of aspect.

We have the concurrent testimony of almost all antiquity, that the Assyrian was the most ancient empire; yet the accounts transmitted by the Grecian authors, especially those of Diodorus Siculus, upon the authority of Ctesias, are so fabulous in themselves, and so discordant with the records of Scripture history, that they must be set aside as altogether unworthy of credit. That Ninus founded Nineveh means no more, than that the Ninevite founded Nineveh. That Semiramis carried her conquests over the greater part of the known world only means, that the worship of the ark, the dove, and other emblematic memorials of the deluge, was extended over the same regions by a people who were thus the earliest propagators of

idolatry. This is the more obvious from the statement, that after the death of Semiramis the nation relapsed into a state of inactivity, and after a successive race of sluggish kings, for thirty generations, was destroyed under Sardanapalus, by a combination of the Medes and Babylonians. After this overthrow it is said to have risen again into a state of greater power and splendour than before ; till it was finally and utterly destroyed under Saracus, by a second combination of Medes and Babylonians. It is exceedingly improbable that the course and catastrophe of any nation should be so exactly repeated—indeed it may be termed impossible. It must have arisen from some mistake in the Grecian transcribers of Assyrian records, if they ever had access to such materials : or if Ctesias did consult state papers of Persia, these would supply but indifferent authority regarding Assyrian affairs. The Babylonian history of Berossus gives no countenance to the Ctesian fables, so far as may be judged from the fragments of it still preserved by Josephus and others ; while the brief and occasional references that may be gleaned from the Bible are directly hostile to any such pretensions. Still it is admitted that the Assyrian is a very ancient empire ; though not the first which assumed the chief sway over the fertile regions of Central Asia.

It has been already shown that Nimrod, leading the confederate and rebellious race of Cush,

expelled Ashur and his descendants from their allotted territory in the land of Shinar, seized it for himself, and in process of time commenced building the tower of Babel, most probably intended for a *πυρεια*, or fire tower, on which to offer sacrifices to the sun, under the name of Bel, or Baal [7]. Hence it was called the tower of Belus, and ascribed by the Greeks to a monarch of that name. This conspicuous object of idolatry drew down the vengeance of God. It was destroyed by lightning, according to certain very ancient records ; and the Cushites were dispersed in terror, and prevented from the possibility of any subsequent complete reunion, by the confusion of dialect miraculously inflicted upon them. Their scattered bands went in various directions, some towards India, as appears from the close similarity between the most ancient Hindoo superstitions, and those which prevailed in other countries of equal antiquity, as Egypt, whither it is well known that the Cushites did betake themselves. Considerable numbers of the Cushites remained in the land, but in a state of subjection to the Assyrians, or to such other of the neighbouring nations as chanced for the time to have the ascendancy. This, however, did not fall to the lot of the Assyrians for some centuries. In the fabulous histories of Ninus and Semiramis we find them encountering a desperate resistance from a Bactrian power ; and this agrees with other dim and obscure passages in ancient authors, indi-

cating the existence of a great kingdom in some district of Central Asia, still farther east than Nineveh or Babylon. But whether the seat of this ancient kingdom were what was afterwards known by the name of Bactria; or whether it might have been Median cannot be with certainty known, though the probability inclines strongly to Bactria. The existence of some such power seems to be proved by the mention in the Bible of Chedorlaomer king of Elam, chief of the confederacy of Shemitic nations against the Cushite, in the days of Abraham. The overthrow of this monarch by Abraham had the effect of again preventing the chilling influence of one great empire, which would have been destructive to the development of the human mind in every respect, if spell-bound by the fiat of universal despotism in the very youth of the world.

The next mention that we find made of an eastern empire of any extent is that of Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, who subjugated the Israelites about 1400, B. C. It is most probable that this king was an Aramite, from the Hebrew appellation of his kingdom,—Aram-Naharaim, or Syria of the rivers. His name seems to allude to some connection with the Cushites, either as having been descended from them, or having obtained some triumphs over some parts of their scattered hordes. About this time the Egyptian hero Sesostris, having pushed his conquests some say to the Indus,

turned, and bent his course up the Euphrates, following the path by which the caravans had already begun to transmit the wealth of India into the more western parts of Asia, and even into Europe. The devastation occasioned by this plundering march, once more reduced the nations of Central Asia to such a state of feebleness as to prevent the rise of any imperial power among them for centuries. One salutary effect was the opportunity which this gave to the Jews to pass through their period of growth, and rise to full maturity, uncramped by the overshadowing influence of any great contiguous empire. The kingdom of Damascus offered some resistance to David, as did also that of Zobah, probably the Nisibis of the Greeks; but neither were able to impede his conquering career, till his sway reached to the Euphrates. All this time we hear of no Assyrian power; yet had it existed in that degree of imperial might and dignity stated by the Greek historians, it must have made an attempt to repress the formidable growth of the Hebrew nation. Nineveh indeed must have existed as a city; and may have been gradually acquiring that power which was ere long to render it the foremost among the nations.

At length the Assyrians emerged out of the obscurity in which they had continued so long, and by extending their conquests to Western Asia, especially to Judea, became conspicuous actors in the great drama of the world. About

the year 774, B. C., Pul, king of Assyria, came against Menahem, king of Israel, and exacted a heavy contribution, with which the Jewish monarch was obliged to comply, to avoid the danger of a war with such a powerful adversary. It is worthy of observation, that the king of Nineveh, who repented at the predictions of Jonah, might have been either Pul, or his immediate predecessor, as according to the best computation the mission of the prophet happened about thirteen years before the expedition of Pul against Menahem. As Pul continued to reign twenty-one years after that expedition, it is probable that the king who obeyed the warning of Jonah was his predecessor. Thus, though they knew it not, the Assyrian monarchs were displaying on a large scale the same important truth shown by the kingdom of Israel: viz. that obedience to the will of God is followed by blessings bestowed on the obedient nation. The subsequent prosperity of the Assyrian empire was the fruit of that pious monarch's humility and devotion: in after times when Nahum denounced the coming judgments it repented not, the doom was fulfilled, and it sunk into utter and irrecoverable desolation, till its very site can scarcely with any great degree of certainty be pointed out.

After Pul, Tiglath-Pileser ascended the throne; and being called by the king of Judah (Ahaz) to his assistance against the kings of Israel and Syria, availed himself of this opportunity of en-

larging his dominions, reduced both kingdoms, and exacted a heavy sum from the king of Judah.

Desirous to relieve himself from the Assyrian yoke, Hosea, king of Israel, (Samaria, or the Ten Tribes,) applied to Sabaco, the king of the Nubian Cushites, at that time ruling over Egypt, for aid. Shalmaneser, to punish this revolt effectually, took Samaria, overran the whole of the kingdom, and carried away the body of the people, "and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes."—"And brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel." Here it may be remarked, that the mention of Babylon and Cuthah indicate that the land in the neighbourhood of Babylon had about the same time been subjected by the Assyrian arms; and thus another series of events commenced, destined to terminate in the most important results to both the Jews and the Assyrians. The famous epoch of Nabonassar, 747, B. C., takes its date from the latter part of the reign of Tiglath-Pileser, or the beginning of that of Shalmaneser, according to different chronologists,—the former the more probable. The name Nabonassar, seems a compound of Babylonian and Assyrian terms,—Nabon-assur, or Nabo the Assyrian. He may have been an Assyrian, but appointed viceroy over the newly

conquered kingdom, assuming at the same time a Babylonian prænomen, out of compliment to the subjects of his government.

Sennacherib attempted to follow the example of his predecessors, and to do to Judah as they had done to Israel: but a king that feared the Lord sat on the throne of David, and Jehovah was not unmindful of His covenant. The boastful Assyrian was turned away from Jerusalem to meet the threatened advance of Tirhakah (Taraco) king of Cush, and on his march through the desert his army was miraculously smitten by the simoon, or a pestilence, till 185,000 men perished in one night. On his return to Nineveh he was murdered by his own sons, who fled to Armenia, leaving the throne to his youngest son Esarhaddon.

These calamities so weakened the Assyrian empire, that Merodach-Baladan, (the Mardoch-Empadus of the canon of Ptolemy,) at that time viceroy of Babylon, threw off the yoke, and sent messengers to Hezekiah, to congratulate him on his deliverance, and on his recovery from a dangerous illness; as also, probably, to inquire into the nature of the miraculous token of recovery by the reversed motion of the shadow on the sun-dial, which God had condescended to grant him, and which may have excited particular attention among the Babylonians, already celebrated for their astronomical knowledge.

This attempt of the Babylonian viceroys to

secure their independence proved at that time premature ; and they were reduced to subjection by Esarhaddon, who is probably the Asaradinus of the table of Babylonian kings. Though this monarch restored in a considerable degree the power of the Assyrian empire, it had been too severely shaken to maintain the same aggressive character as formerly. Being still apprehensive of the disaffected Babylonians, no viceroy or governor was appointed for the two following reigns, and the Assyrian kings resided occasionally at Babylon themselves, as appears from the fact, that Manasseh, king of Judah, was carried by one of the latter to Babylon. But a change in the empire of the East was at hand, the proximate causes of which are involved in very considerable obscurity.

After Chyniladan the Assyrian, the next king of Babylon is Nabopolassar, who is distinguished by the appellation of "*the Chaldean.*" Under this king the Babylonians again rebelled against the Assyrians ; and an alliance having been formed between them and the Medes, under Cyaxares, the combined armies laid siege to Nineveh, into which Saracus had retired, after sustaining a severe defeat. Such was the strength of the city walls that he might still laugh a siege to scorn, though conducted by the most formidable adversaries. But the Tigris becoming excessively swollen by the heavy rains in the mountains, rose deep against the walls, which being chiefly of brick could not resist its soaking

and sapping action ; and being thus reconverted into clay, crumbled down in huge masses, leaving the town open to the enemy. Upon this, Saracus collected together his most valuable effects, formed of them a vast pile in his palace, and setting it on fire cast himself into the flames, that he might not survive his empire, and yet perish in a funereal pyre worthy of a monarch ! The walls of Nineveh were never rebuilt ; they gradually resided into the soil, and are now scarcely to be distinguished from the mere inequalities which might be expected to occur on the surface of a piece of ground of such vast extent.

This account, it will be observed, is identical with that of Sardanapalus, commonly imagined to have been the last king of the *first* Assyrian empire, in all but the names of the Ninevite and his assailants. Even here the difference is less than may be thought. The terminations of all names given by Greek writers are Grecised, so that they furnish no evidence on either side. But Sardanapalus is a compound name, Saradon-Pul ; and of this the only distinctive part is the first syllable, which is also the first of Sarachus. The two names may therefore after all be essentially the same, differing only in ascriptions of title or honour. This seems more probable, than that the same empire should have been twice destroyed by a confederacy of the same foes, and under circumstances almost exactly the same.

Supposing this solution admitted, there still remains another question respecting the sudden growth of the Babylonian power, and the new designation of its monarch, "the Chaldean." As this is almost the only remaining difficulty of any magnitude by which the course of ancient history is impeded, we may be allowed to investigate it with some degree of minuteness, yet as briefly as possible.

We shall be greatly aided in our researches by removing in the first place one source of continual confusion arising out of the unfortunate use of names essentially different, as if they were synonymous. In the English Bible we find the word Chaldeans used as a translation of the Hebrew word Cushdim. Into this error our translators were probably led by the Greek historians, who call the inhabitants of Babylon, at least in the latter period of the empire, Chaldeans. Nor is this an error of slight consequence. It tends to set aside the distinct language of contemporary authors of unimpeachable veracity, for the loose and indefinite expressions of those of a far later date, and of very questionable credit, as being both ignorant and prejudiced. By the use of the term Cushdim, the Hebrew writers point to the origin of the city and nation, from Cush; and remind us of Nimrod son of Cush, by whom Babel was founded, and many of whose followers continued to reside in the vicinity, even after the dispersion. It is very probable that by their superior learning they obtained an ascendancy

over the other natives, or more recent settlers, and became a privileged priest caste, as their kindred did in Egypt and India. The sooth-sayers, astrologers, and interpreters of dreams at the court of Nebuchadnezzar were Cushdim, and their reputation for learning was very high. It thus happened that the descendants of the rebellious Cushites still held the ascendant in the rebel city upon her revival; and thus the earliest teachers of idolatry became again the persecutors of the worshippers of the only true God.

Again, the Greek term, Chaldæan, is not given to the king or people before the reign of Nabopolassar, about 625, B. C. About the same time, or a short while previous, happened the celebrated irruption of the Scythians and Cimmerians from the vicinity of the Palus Mæotis into Upper Asia, which they held in subjection for twenty-eight years, and even penetrated to the borders of Egypt till they were stopped by Psammetichus, not by force, but by the payment of a large sum of money. It is probable that the destruction of the army of Sennacherib led the way to this formidable invasion of Asia by these northern nomads. His successor Esarhaddon, in order to sustain the declining fortunes of the empire, induced the hardy inhabitants of the mountainous regions of Armenia to hire themselves as mercenaries in his service. By their aid he recovered Babylon, and completed the conquest of Judea, though he did not venture to attempt any other foreign

war. The same hardy forces enabled his successor to defeat the Medes under Phraortes, who had advanced against him. One of the most daring of these mountain tribes is called by Xenophon Chalybes; and he derives the name from steel, which he supposes that country to yield. In this he is not altogether correct, and the name itself is most probably inaccurately given, it ought to have been Chaldæi, as indeed we find it in some other authors, and once at least in his own writings. These mercenary troops, then, were Chaldæans. The frequent draughts from that country for the supply of the Assyrian armies may have drained it considerably, so that it could present but a feeble barrier against invaders from a more northern country. At the same time some of the returned mercenaries may have spread such attractive reports respecting the fertility of Asia as to induce the hardy Cimmerians and Scythians to leave their own abodes in entire masses, and precipitate themselves upon the sunny regions of Upper Asia. Thus the employment of the mercenary Chaldæans restored for a while the sinking fortunes of the Assyrian empire, but led ultimately to its utter destruction.

Babylon had been subjected by the aid of these mercenaries; and it is probable that according to the usual policy of the Assyrian kings, considerable bodies of their countrymen had been induced to settle in the town itself. At length Saracus entrusted the government of Babylon to Nabopolassar the leader of these

mercenaries, whence his distinctive appellation, 'the Chaldean,' either because he was a native of that country, or because he was their commander. His name is partly Babylonian, partly Assyrian; and may have been given to him by the king, as the name Belteshazzar was given to Daniel by a subsequent monarch. The greatest probability is that he was a native Chaldean, and that his rude and warlike spirit could not brook the effeminate refinement of the Assyrian king. By his junction with the revolted Medes the Assyrians were bereft of their main support, their mercenary troops, and were consequently unable to keep the field. It was now their hour to experience the calamities which they had inflicted on others. Their city was sacked, their king perished, the ploughshare of desolation razed their palaces and towers, and the very position of their once mighty city became a subject of antiquarian research.

This view of the rise of the Chaldean name and power appears to be confirmed by an obscure passage in Isaiah, upon which, at the same time, it tends to throw very considerable light. The passage alluded to is Isaiah xxiii. 13. "Behold the land of the Chaldeans (Cushdim): this people was not till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; and he brought it to ruin." The latter clause refers to the destruction of

Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar ; and is by Lowth translated, " This people hath reduced her to ruin." The translation of Michaelis without the last clause is as follows, " Behold the land of the Chaldeans ; that nation which a little time since was not. The Assyrian subdued it, and gave it to the inhabitants of the desert ; they transformed the wandering hordes of nations into settled abodes ; and built up the palaces of the land." The prophet is foretelling the destruction of Tyre ; and to enhance the striking nature of the prediction he mentions the people by whom it should be accomplished, pointing out at the same time peculiarities in their circumstances which seemed to render it very improbable that they should ever acquire such power. " Behold," says the prophet, " the land of the Cushdim: this people had continued for ages tributary to its more powerful neighbours, and ' was not ' worthy of mention among nations ; till the king of Assyria assigned it to his mercenary troops, so recently a mere horde of nomad mountaineers, and aided them in erecting public buildings, and in beautifying and strengthening the chief city Babylon. Yet this very nation, (Chaldean or Cushdim, or Babylonian,) though of such recent formation, shall extend its sway over Western Asia, and shall bring Tyre itself to ruin." This perfectly agrees with the solution offered above, explains the origin of the term Chaldean as used by the Greeks, and accounts for the retention of the

term Cushdim by the Hebrew writers, as in reality still the body of the nation, the true Chaldeans being merely the casual prevalence of a warlike horde and its heroic chief, whose achievements rendered their name familiar to all subsequent times, and almost entirely extinguished the memory and even the name of those who still continued to form the mass of the population.

The subsequent history of the Chaldeo-Babylonian empire is too well known to justify the expenditure of much space on the easy task of tracing its career of brief but unequalled brilliance. For this a few sentences may suffice. The rise of Babylon and the suitableness of its situation for an emporium for the trade of Central Asia, excited the jealousy of Necho king of Egypt. Putting his army in motion he overran Palestine and Syria, penetrated to Carchemish, (Circesium,) took it, and seemed on the point of tracing, in an opposite direction, the course of the conquering Sesostris. But he was encountered and overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar, then general for his father, Carchemish was retaken, and the tide of victory and invasion completely turned. Onward swept the fierce Chaldean with irresistible prowess. Jerusalem, which had joined the Egyptian, fell before his arms, and many of the Jews were carried into captivity. Returning to Babylon to secure the throne upon his father's death, the Jews revolted, and were again overwhelmed,

and carried almost entirely away. Tyre was smitten in its pride, but the hour of its utter destruction had not yet come. The fertile plains of Lower Egypt were withered by his devastating progress, as by the blast of the desert. Sated with blood and conquest he returned, and spent the remainder of his life in embellishing the capital of his empire. The events of his latter years are best known to us from the writings of the prophet Daniel, to which it is enough to refer.

His son proved both weak and tyrannical, and was put to death by the husband of his sister, who seized the throne. This king fell in battle against Cyrus; his son was slain by his own subjects, after a reign of nine months, and the royal line was restored in the person of Labynetus, Nabonadius, or Belshazzar. He proved unequal to the task of sustaining a falling cause; and notwithstanding the masculine courage and conduct of his mother Nitocris, the true Semiramis, and his alliance with Cræsus king of Lydia, "his kingdom was divided and given to the Medes and Persians," led by that equally gallant and politic warrior Cyrus, whom Isaiah had mentioned by his name, as destined to subdue nations, and to restore the captivity of Jerusalem [*m*].

It does not necessarily fall within our plan to attempt any description of the mighty cities Nineveh and Babylon, the successive sites of empire, farther than may be requisite as indi-

cations of the mental progress of their inhabitants. Still less is it necessary to detail the various stages of declension through which, in subsequent rebellious attempts and subjugations, Babylon passed, till, in the language of Isaiah, it became "a possession for the bittern, and pools of water,—and was swept with the besom of destruction." All this has been so copiously illustrated in many popular works, that we may safely assume it as a part of ascertained general knowledge.

The history of the kingdom of Israel during the reign of its conquering monarch David, and his wise and magnificent successor Solomon, when it extended from the borders of Egypt on the west, to the Euphrates on the east, may also be passed over without much comment. The revolt of the Ten tribes had the immediate effect of putting an end to all its aggressive attempts, and even exposing it, in its divided weakness, to the attacks of other nations, who were rising into great strength in its neighbourhood. The empires of Egypt and Assyria were alternately invoked by the rival Hebrew kingdoms; and thus their mutual jealousy and hostilities, while preparing their own ultimate ruin, were at the same time instrumental in bringing before these great nations the sacred truths of which the race of Abraham were the sole depositories. But the Ten tribes had adopted the idolatrous worship of their first king, Jeroboam, and were consequently no longer qualified to be

disseminators of divine truth and pure religion. They were, therefore, carried away by the Assyrian monarchs; and have never since appeared as distinct agents in the work of Providence. Whether they ceased to exist as a separate people, among the nations into whose lands they were carried, cannot be certainly known, and is a matter of no historical importance, since the remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin, together with the Levites, performed that part in the great drama of the world, which the Jews as a nation were constituted to perform. The kingdom of Judea fell in its turn before the power of the Babylonians; and from that time continued so completely under the thralldom of the dominant empire, whichever that might be, that it partook in all their fluctuations, wheeling ever within the boiling margin of that huge vortex by which they were successively engulfed.

Though we have classed the Assyrian and Babylonian empires together, as in reality the same power in respect to the history of the world in general, yet they differed considerably in certain important particulars. Their apparent identity was so striking, however, that even the best informed Greek authors frequently confounded them; as Xenophon, who terms the king of Babylon, the Assyrian, though Nineveh had been destroyed about seventy years before. The term Assyrian had become familiar to the Greeks, and they gave it to the ruling empire of

the East, previous to Cyrus, be the seat of power where it might. This accounts for the great duration of 1300 years assigned to it by certain authors,—520 by others, neither of which is correct, so far as regards imperial sway. It is of more importance to observe, so far as may be practicable, what were its political institutions, mental development, and religious tenets, and in what they differed from those of Babylon, or were superseded by, or merged into them.

The earliest monarchies have already been shown to have sprung from the patriarchal system. One part of this system was changed by the rebellion of Nimrod, so far as regarded the race of Ham, particularly the Cushites of Babylon, among whom the priestly and regal offices were rendered distinct. After the overthrow of Nimrod's kingdom and the dispersion of the greater part of his followers, the remnant who continued to reside in the vicinity of Babel, being in possession of the acquirements of their aspiring countrymen, especially of their astronomical knowledge and astrological pretensions, obtained a considerable degree of influence over the rude tribes among whom they dwelt. They did not, however, attempt to assume a position of political importance for many centuries, remaining subject to whatever nation, Bactrian, Elamite, or Ninevite, happened for the time to have the chief ascendancy. The Shemitic nations, meanwhile, had learned the effect of combina-

tion, and had acquired some skill in the art of war, during the hostilities carried on against the Cushites. First Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and afterwards Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, made considerable advances towards the acquisition of imperial sway, if not universal monarchy. It may be considered fortunate for the free development of the human mind, in its various capacities, that these early attempts at extensive domination were rendered abortive : or rather, the wisdom of Providence prevented what would have been destructive to its gracious designs in favour of the human race. The corruption of the patriarchal system could be nothing but the most absolute despotism. Being founded on paternity there could be no ulterior human or political principle to which appeal might be made. Religion, or the power of appealing to heaven, and calling on a Divine Umpire and Judge, might have been a sufficient check, but that the king, by the patriarchal system, was also the priest, through whom alone any such appeal could be made ; consequently the religious principle, instead of modifying and mitigating, served but to confirm the political despotism. It was thus a tyranny enthralling alike soul and body in its degrading fetters.

From this it follows, that had an early monarchy arisen among the Shemitic nations, who continued to retain the peculiarities of the patriarchal system, it would have been productive of worse consequences to mankind than even

the Cushite rebellion ; since among the nations sprung from Cush, the regal and priestly offices were disjoined, so that there existed some check, though both a weak and a corrupt one, upon the power of the monarch. What we know of the Assyrian history perfectly agrees with this view. Nothing can be more tyrannical than the conduct of these monarchs in removing a conquered nation from their abodes, and transferring them to some other conquered country, whose inhabitants are compelled to submit to a corresponding transplantation. Civilized Europe in the nineteenth century, has placidly witnessed an instance of similar atrocity, in the conduct of semi-barbarous Russia towards Poland. Such a process, in addition to its cruelty and injustice, was most skilfully adapted to destroy even the remembrance of liberty in the vanquished nations. The scene of a well-fought battle,—the ruins of a town or fortress which had been gallantly defended,—the tomb of a hero whose arm had long upheld his country's sinking cause,—all conspire to keep alive the fire of patriotism in a nation's heart, and at fitting junctures to fan the latent embers into a fresh burst of living and irresistible flame. But the fatal policy of the Assyrian despots conceived the idea of carrying the subdued nation entirely away, so that all such inspiring associations might be hid for ever from their minds, and themselves left to sink into utter and hopeless slavery. Perhaps such *was* the result with re-

gard to a majority of the Ten tribes carried away by Shalmaneser; especially as they had lost, by their idolatrous apostacy, that distinctive religion by which their brethren of Judea were preserved in separate existence [*n*].

In one instance the union of priestly and regal functions, and the possession of absolute power, was productive of good. At the preaching of Jonah the king of Nineveh repented, and commanded his whole subjects to follow his example and keep a solemn fast in such manner as he directed, and repent of their evil deeds, that God might "turn away from his fierce anger." And so successful was this repentance, that it not only retarded their doom, but was the first step of that course of prosperity which placed them for a time at the head of the Asiatic nations. This furnishes an incidental proof, that the true cause of their ultimate ruin was the corruption of their religious principles, which in the patriarchal system, whereon the Assyrian monarchy was founded, formed the central point from whence every thing emanated, and being corrupt, caused the corruption and ultimate dissolution of the whole frame of society.

The loss of their veteran army, cut off by the angel of the Lord,—or by the simoom, or blast of the desert commissioned by the Lord,—reduced the Ninevite monarchs to the necessity of employing mercenary forces, and from that time their empire began to totter to its fall. The spirit of enterprise was extinguished in

both king and people. Immured within the walls of his seraglio the sovereign gave a loose to the utmost excesses, and plunged into the most voluptuous and degrading effeminacy. In this too his example was followed, and his people became incapable of defending themselves against the revolted Medes, joined as these were by the mercenary Chaldeans, who had been recently settled at Babylon. Then came the consummation of the patriarchal sovereignty, as degenerated into thorough despotism. Its energies had been exhausted—the destructive principle had spread from the heart throughout the whole frame of society, tainting and paralyzing as it spread,—the pride of the prince could no longer rouse the courage of the people whom he had himself been the chief cause of corrupting; and the system,—king, people, and even city,—perished utterly from off the earth.

In the destruction of Nineveh an example was set which has often been followed,—or a process gone through which has often been repeated since in Asia. The Chaldeans, a rude band of hardy and warlike mountaineers, after serving as mercenaries till they became enamoured of the land and despised the effeminacy of its inhabitants, determined to take possession of what, in their own opinion at least, they so much better deserved. Their fierce courage for a time carried all before them, and their triumphant career traversed an extent of conquered kingdoms sufficient to raise them to

a very high degree of military renown. But the veteran troops wore out; their successors relapsed into the luxurious effeminacy of the nations they had so recently subdued; they continued in the possession of empire merely in consequence of the terror of their former name; till another host of semi-barbarous nomads, descending from their mountains with kindred fierceness, hardihood, and impetuosity, became in their turn the conquerors, destined ere long to suffer a similar declension from their rude virtues, to be terminated by a similar overthrow. This the Chaldeans under Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar did; this the Persians under Cyrus repeated; and though the Macedonian conquest can scarcely be included in the same class of nomad invasions, yet the numerous hordes of Arabs, Turks, Tartars, and Mongolians, that have successively overrun Asia, may fairly be considered as repetitions of the Chaldean conquests under Nebuchadnezzar. Nor is it altogether incredible that this event actually led the way to the others, by pointing out the practicability of such a conquest. If we can place any dependence upon Quintus Curtius, the Scythian ambassadors reminded Alexander of that invasion and subjugation of Upper Asia by their ancestors, which we consider as connected with the rise of the Chaldean power, and which they had not forgotten though about 300 years had elapsed since it happened. The cherished memory of such an achievement is no trifling pre-

paration for an attempt at its repetition; and the restless and predatory habits of nomadic and pastoral nations, will always render them very formidable invaders, except where civilization has increased the skill without lessening the courage of the troops, as in the case of disciplined standing armies.

In Egypt we have been led to contemplate the progress and fate of the patriarchal system, when its two leading principles were disunited, the priesthood and the sovereignty being held by different castes and individuals. The malignity of the corruption, which had entered into each principle, was weakened by being divided, and each actually counteracted, to a certain extent, the evil influence of the other; for each aiming at despotic power kept its antagonist in check, though the subtle poison of false religion prevailed, to the ultimate ruin of both. In the fate of the Assyrian empire we see the same principles, each corrupted,—for the monarchic principle had become despotic by ceasing to be paternal, and religion had degenerated into idolatry,—and both operating with combined and concentrated virulence to the utter and irremediable ruin of both ruler and people. The degeneracy of both had grown so desperate, that nothing but entire annihilation could ensue, if assailed from without, because the sustaining principle of moral and political vitality had perished within, and dissolution was ready to take place. But even if no external violence

had overthrown an empire in such a condition, its future existence would have been merely one huge monotony of hopeless degradation,—a stagnant, death-in-life idiotcy of the whole human race.

That this is more than a theoretic assumption, or groundless assertion, may be proved by a glance at the condition of China. Without giving credit to the fabulous antiquity claimed for their national existence by the Chinese historians, we may admit that it is one of the most ancient nations in the world; and that, in all probability, it was founded very soon after the general division of the earth among the descendants of Noah. It would of course be founded on the patriarchal system, in its original form and to its fullest extent. With this supposition the state of the facts, so far as we find, or can understand them, agree. In religion the emperor is the high priest of the nation, and he alone may sacrifice to the chief god; while the rest of the population may worship as they please, in a subordinate manner; the consequence of which is atheism in all those who venture to think, and gross superstition in all others. The whole property of the kingdom is regarded as belonging to the king; and though this is a legal fiction, it opens a door to the most oppressive exaction on the one hand, and causes evasion, deceit, and falsehood to the utmost extent on the other, besides tending to repress all enterprise, and discourage new com-

binations or inventions. Politically considered the emperor is the father of his people, and his authority is perfectly unlimited, so that his benevolence, or his indolence, as the case may be, forms the only modification of his actual or possible tyranny. The patriarchal system, in short, is established in China, and has held sway for ages, unmodified and uncontrolled. Removed to a distance from the grand arena on which the affairs of the world were transacted, it caught none of the changing impulses of great events ; but held on its even tenor the same as the whole Asiatic population would have done, had the rising power of Chedorlaomer, or any other patriarchal conqueror, been permitted to acquire universal monarchy. What the consequences *would* or *might* have been, in the major case, we may fairly conjecture from seeing what they *have* been, in the minor. Throughout the whole of China the mind of man is crippled, dwarfed, and degraded to the utmost possible degree. Their religion is atheism or superstition ; their political aspect is that of one tyrant and many million slaves ; their philosophy combines the scepticism of the Pyrrhonists and the slothful indulgence of the Epicureans ; their science does not extend beyond the merely manual skill of the handicraftsman ; and the rest of the national character is a gross compound of pride, ignorance, cowardice, knavery, falsehood and vice, of the meanest, foulest, and most contemptible kinds. What a proof does this loathsome and

miserable picture furnish of the wisdom and the mercy of God, who did not suffer the mass of mankind to be enthralled by the withering spell which an universal monarchy of such a character would have cast upon the world, blighting its powers and extinguishing its hopes. In itself such a state is indeed hopeless ; but it may be smitten from without, its materials remoulded, and a better character impressed. This was what the Chaldeo-Babylonian empire did for man when it destroyed the Assyrian ; but had Nineveh possessed equal power some centuries sooner she might have paralyzed the world, and her overthrow and its recovery would have been equally impracticable by the operation of common and known causes. The economy of God's providence, however, prevented an evil, which it would have required a miracle to remedy. The inadequacy of common means to accomplish a renovation in such a case is illustrated by an event of a very striking kind in Chinese history, —we allude to its subjugation by the Tartars. Though they were able to overthrow the inert mass with perfect ease, they could not inspire it with fresh life. The infusion of the free, wild, Tartar blood, though copious and powerful, was speedily lost in the sluggish tide which weltered slowly along the gorged veins of the unwieldy carcass ; and after one unwilling heave, the black surge subsided into the silent torpor of corruption.

The principle of the Chaldean monarchy was

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that of absolute despotism, being founded on the right of conquest. It would indeed retain so much of the patriarchal spirit as is generally found among nomadic races, where the chief of the tribe is so, because considered to be the head of the family. In this respect Nabopolassar, the Chaldean, was the natural head of his own countrymen; but over the Babylonians he ruled by right of conquest, and therefore despotically. By Nebuchadnezzar this formidable combination of ruling principles was carried to its utmost extent; rendering him truly a fitting representative of the monarchic principle, in its most palmy state, consequently most aptly designated as the golden head of the imperial image, seen by himself in a dream, and interpreted by Daniel. In his violent proceedings and threatenings against the "wise men"—and the "magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans, (Cushdim,)" it may be very plainly seen, that he paid no great deference to the privileged orders of the Babylonian priesthood. To this, undoubtedly, it was owing that he so readily rendered homage to the God of Daniel; and though afterwards so inflated by the pride of uninterrupted prosperity and unrivalled power, he uttered those presumptuous boastings which drew down upon him the signal judgment of God, who resisteth the proud, still he continued within the reach of repentance and restoration; and was at length brought to acknowledge and "bless the Most High, who doeth according to

His will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." This recognition of the true God by the king, though most unwelcome to the corrupt priests, was too well known and of too much importance to be altogether omitted, even in their own fabulous histories. Both Berosus and Abydenus make some mention of a remarkable disease under which he laboured, and a prediction which he is supposed to have uttered. In this manner God was pleased to reveal the knowledge of Himself to the Babylonians, through their king; but when on his death both king and people neglected this opportunity, and did despite to His chosen people and to the consecrated vessels of His temple, they filled that cup of Divine wrath which they were soon to drink to the very dregs.

The throne of the mighty and magnificent Nebuchadnezzar was filled by a succession of weak and effeminate, yet cruel and oppressive tyrants, till the full malignity of despotism having been shown, by its corruption alike of prince and people, the experiment was completed, and the Babylonian empire '*numbered, weighed, and divided,*' to make room for that of the Persians, by whom a farther development of human nature should be made, on a new principle, and under new institutions.

It is worthy of observation, however, that the ruin of Nineveh was single, utter, and irrecoverable; whereas that of Babylon was accomplished by a series of subjugations and devastations,

occasioned by its repeated efforts to recover its former power. This difference in the fate of these two great cities may be accounted for in various ways. In Nineveh the union and consequent joint corruption of both political and religious principles, produced a greater degree of degeneracy than in Babylon, and therefore gave occasion to a more thorough and immediate overthrow. In Babylon, on the other hand, unmitigated despotism had produced its usual effects, by exciting a strong spirit of selfishness in the enslaved people, who had nothing in common with their oppressors, so soon as the tide of foreign conquest ceased to inflate them with vanity, and gorge their stores with pillage. But this selfish spirit is not quite so helpless as the paralysis of superstition and voluptuousness combined ; and though the Babylonians would not fight in defence of their tyrant, their subsequent efforts gave sufficient evidence that they could and dared encounter hardship and danger when their own interests were at stake. The very scorn which Nebuchadnezzar and his successors entertained for the Cushdim, and other orders of the priests, prevented the same alienation of the public mind which would have destroyed their influence, and at the same time would have left the public mind itself without a principle of sufficient strength to rouse it from the prostration of defeat. A nation cannot be overthrown entirely and hopelessly so long as it retains strong love for either its political, or its

religious institutions ; but if indifferent to both it may perish utterly. The disjunction of the regal from the priestly character in Babylon allowed the latter to extricate itself from the ruin of the former, and enabled it to make repeated efforts to resuscitate the nation. In Nineveh they were united,—both were corrupted,—both sunk under one destiny, and with them city and people disappeared together. Thus it was proved, that national ruin brought on by the union of despotism and superstition as state principles, might be sudden and would be irretrievable, because destructive of the two vital principles of society : while in a state of disunion, still more of opposition, despotism would destroy itself, and might cause national overthrow, but not national annihilation, so long as its distinctive religion retained some influence over the nation's heart. Such a state of half-animation, however, it will be seen, can continue no longer than till some truer or more attractive religion obtains the ascendancy ; when the galvanic life of the struggling superstition will cease its spasmodic heavings, and the released elements of the defunct nation will speedily be blended with those of the dominant power, within whose controlling influence it has been drawn.

Another circumstance which contributed powerfully, though in a subordinate manner, to the entire destruction of Nineveh, was the peculiarity of its situation. The large navigable

rivers Tigris and Euphrates, were excellently adapted for the channel of communication between India and Central and Western Asia. While Babylon remained tributary to Assyria its wealth might be considered the property of the sole sovereign, who could on that account have no motive for impeding the course of its prosperity. It might indeed be regarded as the chief emporium of trade in the Assyrian empire, so long as it aspired to be nothing more than a mercantile city. The excellence of its various productions seem very early to have made them objects of attraction, as we find a "Babylonish garment" among the objects which excited the cupidity of Achan, at the time when the Hebrews invaded Canaan. In this respect the Babylonian Cushites resembled their kinsmen of Egypt, who also were celebrated for their linen manufacture. Perceiving its advantages as a leading point in the line of commercial intercourse the Assyrian monarchs repaired Babylon, and gave every encouragement to the trading spirit of its enterprising inhabitants. But the spirit of commerce is essentially a selfish spirit, and incapable of gratitude, estimating kindnesses and benefits merely as articles of barter. The Babylonians availed themselves of the earliest opportunity of increasing the calamities of their benefactors, by attempting to acquire for themselves a separate dominion. Though this rebellion was suppressed, and the city held in subjection for a time by a garrison

of Chaldean mercenaries, yet the object was not relinquished; and the garrison with its commander adopting similar views, they not only secured their own independence, but transferred the seat of empire. But the site of Nineveh precluded the possibility of its continuing to exist in a secondary rank, as a mercantile city, Babylon retaining a monopoly of trade, together with the sceptre of state. The line of traffic then left the Tigris, followed the Euphrates to Circesium, (Carchemish,) and thence by Palmyra through Palestine into Egypt, or by another route through Cappadocia into Asia Minor. Nineveh, which was situated on the east bank of the Tigris, was thus left altogether without attractions or resources of any kind; and in a short time sunk into masses of indistinguishable ruins.

One peculiarity of such cities as Nineveh and Babylon remains to be mentioned. Owing their rise either to the monarchical principle alone,—or to the commercial spirit alone,—or to a combination of the two, they retained the characteristic distinctions of the causes from which they sprung. In the case of Nineveh the monarchical principle predominated and the city consisted almost entirely of temples, palaces, and fortifications. The body of the people were in a condition too deeply degraded to form any constitutently prominent portion of the imperial city. Large spaces within the walls were left open for the purposes of culture and even pas-

turage; and while the haughty sovereign dwelt in a palace of surpassing magnificence, and was the object of an inferior degree of divine honours, the majority of the population crouched under huts and tents, scarcely less perishable than Jonah's gourd. This at once accounts for the immense magnitude of the city,—“a city of three days' journey,”—twenty miles in length, and twelve in breadth, and explains the phrase, “and also much cattle,” which it was said to contain. In such a city when the public buildings were overthrown the whole was overthrown; and its political importance being destroyed it possessed nothing which could restore it from its ruined condition. This is another collateral proof, that the destruction brought upon a nation by tyranny and superstition is irremediable; because there remains no central point of social union and common welfare on which it may be reconstructed,—nor any vital principle to give it reanimation, if its scattered members could be collected and replaced in something like the semblance of a living form.

When the commercial spirit alone gave origin to a town, it assumed little other aspect than that of a permanent encampment of some great trading caravan. There might be a temple, and the residences of the priests erected in a more solid and enduring manner; and their ruins might remain for some ages after every other trace of having been inhabited should have disappeared. Whatever led to any change in

the route of commerce would cause the immediate desertion of those temporary cities, and the erection of similar structures in the new line. This accounts for the casual ruins that meet the eye of the traveller in places now altogether uninhabited, and of the previous existence of which history is frequently silent; as also for the disappearance of places formerly of some note, of which every person's reading will suggest numerous instances.

When the monarchical and the commercial principles were united, as in Babylon, much greater permanence might be expected. Accordingly we find Babylon rising repeatedly from its ruins, and assuming considerable importance, even after it had lost its imperial sway. In addition to its public buildings, palaces, temples, hanging gardens, etc. which were of unrivalled magnitude and splendour, the houses of the citizens themselves, were three or four stories high, and furnished with all that could contribute to comfort, convenience, and stability. The overthrow of a dynasty, therefore, or the destruction of towers, temples, and palaces, might lessen the power and impair the splendour of Babylon; but while the river remained open, and her merchants retained their commodious and stable warehouses and personal abodes, she could not sink into utter desolation. These circumstances seemed to promise her a perpetual existence; yet the solemn voice of prophecy had denounced a very different doom,

—that “her cities should become desolations, a dry land and a wilderness, a land where no man dwelleth, neither doth son of man pass thereby.” The exact fulfilment of these terrible predictions has been so fully treated of in many popular works, that it need not be repeated here: besides that our object is to investigate the spirit, rather than to narrate the facts of history. Suffice it to mention, that the boom thrown across the Euphrates,—the altering the course of the river,—the destruction of embankments, quays, and canals,—and the erection of rival cities in the vicinity, together with the frequently repeated sackings and plunderings to which by various conquerors Babylon was exposed, reduced it at length to that condition in which it has long lain, displaying to the eye of the traveller nothing but “heaps of desolations.”

It is impossible to give any accurate account of the progress which the Babylonians had made in the various arts of civilized life. The accounts of the ancients are disfigured by fables and exaggeration; and it is now in such a ruined condition that nothing certain and definite can be learned respecting the particulars of Babylonian skill and civilization. The desolation on the western side of the river is the most complete, with the exception of the Birs Nimrod, as it is termed by the Arabs, and which there is every probability for supposing to be the remains of the tower of Babel. On

the eastern side are various immense mounds of ruins, termed severally Mukallibe, El Kasr, and Amram. These it is almost certain, were the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, the hanging gardens, and the chief fortress or citadel. In the ruins of El Kasr bricks with inscriptions in the cuneiform character have been found, but they have not yet been read,—only they seem of a documentary nature from their similarity to each other, as if drawn up according to some common form. “The language,” says Mr. Rich, “may be safely pronounced to be Chaldee; the system of letters an alphabetical not a symbolical one; and each figure seen on the bricks a simple letter, and not a word or compound character.” From the remarkable fact of the inscribed side being almost always turned downwards, it would seem that they were not intended to be read;—perhaps these inscriptions were of a talismanic nature, and intended to propitiate the deities, or secure their protection as by the influence of a spell; and the reputation of the ancient Chaldeans for skill in judicial astrology lends strength to this conjecture. The similarity of these inscriptions, which gives them a documentary aspect, is perfectly accordant with this hypothesis, as it is probable that there would be an established formula for each common charm. All the buildings of Babylon were of brick, either dried in the sun, or burnt in kilns, and the latter alone have inscriptions,—perhaps we should not be wide of the mark, if instead of in-

scriptions, we should regard them as *impressions*, stamped upon the brick before it was hardened. These, it is obvious, will never enable us to arrive at any acquaintance with Babylonian literature, and there are no other remains to aid our researches into that department of their history.

Their architectural skill cannot be too highly estimated, considering the nature of their materials. In the construction of canals, also, they excelled, and in every thing connected with commercial enterprise. Their wealth, if we may credit the statements of ancient authors, was almost incalculable. Nor was it strange that it should be so. Occupying the most favourable position for conducting the whole traffic between India and Western Asia, and having enjoyed a monopoly of that most productive trade for centuries, they accumulated a greater mass of wealth than perhaps was ever collected together in any other spot of earth. This, while it made Babylon an object of envy and cupidity to all surrounding nations, enabled it to raise works of ornament and defence, beyond all rivalry. Luxury abounded to a very great extent ; but did not occasion the lethargic voluptuousness, which is its general accompaniment. It is not unworthy of remark, that in a great commercial emporium there is often a sort of frenzied and restless activity, producing effects which might have been vainly expected from a purer and better principle. Thus the Babylonians ventured to throw off the Persian

yoke,—shut themselves up within their lofty walls,—put to death their women and children, with the exception of one female in each house,—and defied the power of Darius Hystaspes,—nor could they be subdued but by stratagem. Thus, long afterwards, the Carthaginians, when driven to despair by the Romans, burst from the stupor into which they had sunk, united their efforts in one common cause, sacrificed their personal ornaments, and even the women cut off their long locks for ropes to work the requisite machinery, the whole city springing at once in the convulsive agony of its endangered avarice, into the fierce attitude of hostility and defiance, like a serpent in early summer, bursting wrathful from his cast slough, in the brightness of his newly-burnished scaly panoply. So strangely can a base passion assume the aspect of a noble one, while selfishness rouses men as only patriotism should; and they act as under demoniacal possession rather than celestial inspiration,—filled by the wild energy of a fiend, rather than the calm magnanimity of an angel.

The religious rites and opinions of the Babylonians are deserving of attention; but unfortunately we are possessed of very little satisfactory information on these topics. The loss of the history of Babylon by Berosus may be regarded as a serious calamity to the world, inasmuch as it has deprived mankind of much information connected with the rise of the first monarchy, and the earliest idolatry. Yet the

fragments preserved by Eusebius, tend so far as they can be understood through the fabulous garb which clothes them, to corroborate the plain statements of the Bible. The appearance of a sage person, called Oannes, from the sea, by whom men were instructed and civilized, refers undoubtedly to the patriarch Noah, the second founder of the human race. Among the names of the subsequent mythic personages may be detected strong resemblances to Ham, Cush, and others, while Nimrod appears under the name Alorus, expressly assigned to him by Abydenus, as the first king of Babylon. But all these were also objects of worship among the idolatrous Babylonians, and that too at a very early period in their history. It almost admits of proof, that the tower of Babel was built for the express purpose of serving as a national *πυρρα*, or fire-tower, with a chapel, or place of worship on the top, open to heaven, and consecrated to the god Bel. Being a *πυρρα* it would have the sacred fire continually burning on the summit; and to this the language of Scripture may allude "a tower whose top unto heaven,"—the supplied words, *may reach*, not being in the original;—that is, "a tower whose top may be consecrated to the worship of the heavenly bodies, especially the sun, and on which its emblem, fire, may be kept continually burning.

In this view the worship of fire must be considered as the first form of idolatry. It has

been already remarked, that this corruption of religion probably originated in the attempt to explain the coexistence of good and evil, by their emblems light and darkness. Of light the sun was the most appropriate representative, hence the worship of the sun; and by one additional step the worship of fire. The transfer of similar veneration to the whole host of heaven was also very natural, having once gone astray after gods of their own devising, and thus Zabaism soon followed the Magian corruption. But these forms of idolatry were too refined for the common populace; and as tradition continued to preserve the names of the earliest patriarchs, with even increasing veneration from the growing obscurity, and the feelings of awe connected with the remembrance of the deluge, these gave rise to another set of deities, with appropriate rites and emblems. The gods Dagon, Dionusos, Osiris, etc., and the goddesses Demeter, Venus, Isis, etc., all exhibit a direct reference to the history of Noah in some of its particulars; while the processional use of the ark, the veneration shown to the dove, the symbolical employment of the rainbow, and such like, are equally capable of explanation by reference to the same great event.

It would seem then, that idolatry speedily divided itself into two main branches:—the primary, regarding light, fire, and celestial genii, commonly termed Magianism, an extension of this to the sun and the other heavenly bodies,

called Zabaism, which kindred superstitions prevailed chiefly among the more cultivated classes, especially the soothsayers, astrologers, and Cushdim :—and the secondary, ascribing divine honours to the diluvian patriarchs, and after them to others of their most distinguished kings and heroes. Magianism seems to have flourished chiefly in Bactria, Media, and Persia ; while Zabaism was more congenial to the taste and purposes of the Babylonian priesthood, among whom astrology and divination were favourite pursuits. The grosser idol-worship of departed heroes was almost confined to the common people, whose inferior degree of intelligence could not rise to the comprehension of the philosophical theories of the Magian or Zabian creeds. This separation of the religious opinions of the cultivated from those of the less cultivated classes, had the effect of plunging the latter into the most degrading and sensual excesses ; and gave rise to the distinction between initiated and uninitiated, carried to such an extent in after times in Greece, both in religion and philosophy. What of their more ethereal worship the priests chose to communicate to the people was reduced to the level of their conceptions by the medium of emblems, and other symbolical adumbrations ; and as usual, the symbol became the object of worship, and the ritual adumbration took the place of the secret doctrine which it had failed to impart. Hence the gross corruption arising from misconceptions respecting

such symbols as Baal-peor, the Lingam, the Phallus, etc., in Syria, India, and Greece.

It is probable that the want of stone, and the consequent want of emblematic, or hieroglyphical sculptures contributed greatly to save the primitive Babylonians from brute-worship, into which their kindred nation the Egyptians sunk. And the Babylonians were at first so frequently assailed by predatory armies, and at the same time so intent upon the gains of commerce, that they had little leisure for attempting any process which did not directly avail either to profit or protection. Before they reached the height of imperial sway the use of alphabetical writing was known in the east; consequently they had then no need to resort to such a cumbrous mode of expressing their meaning, and were thus preserved from one source of corruption. But it is farther to be observed, that though the original builders of Babel were dispersed by the judgment of God, they did not all leave the land of Shinar; and consequently those who remained would be saved from the hardships which attend a new colony, and always not only retard the progress of civilization, but even throw it some degrees back. This enabled them to take the lead of the world in arts and sciences, and retain it for many ages. Possessing the wealth and activity of a mighty commercial people,—influenced by a learned and subtle priesthood,—and ruled by such a king as Nebuchadnezzar, of distinguished

ability, they gave to the world a splendid proof of the triumphs that may be achieved by skill, intelligence, and power, knit together and directed by the sovereign sway of one capacious and despotic mind. In that respect the Babylonian empire far surpassed Egypt, whose monarchs could not undertake any expedition without the concurrence of the priests,—an impediment which Nebuchadnezzar would ill have brooked.

But if in the promptitude with which all its energies could be employed, an absolute monarchy, like that of the Chaldean, excels any of a limited character; and is thus admirably adapted for conquest; it is exposed to equal suddenness of decay, depending, as it must, upon the character of the monarch alone. This was strikingly shewn in the rapid decline of Babylon under its latter kings. Thus the monarchic principle was fully displayed, in its best and in its worst conditions,—in its rise, glory, and decline,—in its triumphs and its ruin; and the world taught, that absolute monarchy may be the best or the worst form of government, but has no mediocrity, and is incapable of permanence,—therefore certainly unfitted to be instrumental in promoting the steady, progressive, and lasting mental and moral improvement of the human race. This was the lesson imparted to man, in his political capacity, by the history and the fate of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires.

The world's mental faculties elicited into full

development were chiefly its perceptions of power and grandeur, and the spirit of ambition, and of enterprise,—faculties still partaking the character of youth, and which perish in the progress of experience whether national or individual. A taste for luxurious refinement had also sprung up; which, under proper limitations, is one of the most efficient agents in promoting general civilization. This taste, however, belongs, in its fastidious lustre, to a more advanced stage of society; and had only begun to tinge the Babylonian horizon, before the beaming of its broad noon-day upon the rich skies of Persia.

Many faculties, however, still remained untried, and various political forms, adapted to the advancing intelligence of the world, had yet to run their round, and display their merits and defects. What these would be in their main outlines, might have been almost foreseen, the idea being once conceived, that the world was undergoing a process of political, mental, and moral trial adapted to its nature and its circumstances. Its earliest form was necessarily that arising out of the first relationship, paternity. While this cultivated the feelings of love, and veneration, reciprocally, so long as its principles were pure; its corruption, producing tyranny on the one hand and slavery on the other, exciting mutual hatred and mutual fear, dissolved all bonds of common union, and precipitated its own destruction. A necessity thus arose for the admission of a new element into society, forming

a medium between its extreme points, of one tyrant and a population of slaves. Where the national religion was independent of the sovereign, the priesthood approximated to such a medium; but being too commonly used as a mere engine of state, they did not sufficiently check the despotic sway of the monarch, nor elevate the character of the people:—indeed their own principles being corrupt, the latter effect was beyond their power, even if it had formed the object of their endeavours. The next resource then, and one which naturally arose of itself, was a modification of the monarchical principle by means of power lodged in the hands of a nobility. Somewhat of this modification had arisen in Egypt, where both priests and warriors were held noble, and participated, though in unequal degrees, in the deliberations of the state. But among the Jews it was already in full action, even under its earliest kings; for in this, as in all other points pertaining to the improvement of mankind, the Hebrew nation was honoured in taking the precedence.

The fall of the patriarchal monarchy of Assyria, and its complete disappearance from the scene of action, allowed the new form of absolute monarchy to reach its fullest development in that of Babylon. Before its energies were exhausted it was caused, by the mouth of its mighty leader Nebuchadnezzar, to bear unequivocal testimony to the sole dominion of the Most High God. The wide extent of its sway

had made almost the whole of the world acquainted with its character, and given to every nation a knowledge of the existence, and a certain degree of interest in the welfare, of every other. The slow preparation necessary in the minority of mankind was now at an end. Commercial intercourse with each other had roused the nations from the degeneracy incident upon early colonization ; and a period of intellectual maturity was rapidly approaching, during which the mental and moral culture of the race would proceed with great acceleration of speed and increase of power. And that man might not be unaware of his position, and the successive aspects of the trial awaiting him, Daniel was inspired to explain the meaning of that visionary aspect in which it had been revealed to the dreaming mind of Nebuchadnezzar. Thus did God again display His wisdom and vindicate His mercy in His gracious dealings with mankind, leaving them not to perish in their ignorance, but giving more distinct and general warnings as the day of their impending trial drew nigh.

This was a partial uplifting of the veil under which the actings of Providence towards the world had been previously concealed. In Judea, over which He ruled openly, as over His own peculiar people, it had been established as the primary and central principle of His theocratic government. Every event in their history had witnessed to the same great truth. Their strict

adherence to pure religion had been always attended by prosperity; their violations had ever been harbingers of adversity. Nor is this connection between pure religion and national prosperity exclusively seen in the history of the Jews. For its own sake, therefore, a state is bound to promote the interest of pure religion. When it does so, prosperity smiles on all its efforts,—as on Nineveh, when its king led the way to national repentance at the preaching of Jonah. When it persecutes religion it is smitten, as Egypt and Assyria successively were when they wantonly assailed Jerusalem, and scoffed at the prayers of its pious monarchs. When it expressly fosters error, as did the latter Assyrian and Babylonian kings, both prince and people perish, till the place which once knew them, knows them no more. When it sinks into a formal mould of superstitious observances, to which however it considers itself bound to give encouragement, as tending to promote the public good, it may remain in a state of benumbed neutrality for ages, as did Egypt; till from some other cause, or on account of the gradual filling up of its cup, its doom be pronounced, and an end put to its separate individuality among the nations. From this it is clearly manifest, that national religion is not only the source and measure of national prosperity, but the very end of national existence. This the course of events was so conducted as to prove, even to the conviction of the proud Chaldean, after his boast,

that—"this great Babylon he had built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of his power and for the honour of his majesty." This Solomon had distinctly stated, declaring that—"righteousness exalteth a nation." And this David had proclaimed in still more lofty and adoring strains;—"happy is that people whose God is the Lord." If nations have yet this great truth to learn, it must be because of their unwillingness to be taught; it must be because the proud human heart is naturally reluctant to admit any principle claiming authority over the dictates of its own haughty will, whether national or individual. If this point is still to be agitated, let it be so;—the conflict of antagonist principles will neutralize both, if both be wrong, or end in the triumph of the right, if one possess that character; and in either case the wisdom of God will be rendered apparent, and the good of man secured.

CHAPTER IV.

PERSIA.

THE course of events having now brought us within the region of ascertained history, it will be less necessary to dwell on minutiae, which may be assumed as generally known. Yet it seems necessary once more to revert, though with considerable reluctance, to times and events, of which we can, instead of certainty, obtain little more than plausible conjectures. The character of the Persians, as conquerors of the East, is sufficiently well known; but as that character had received its elementary formation long before, we must examine a little the state of its youth, before proceeding to treat of its maturity.

It has been already mentioned, that there are indications of some powerful monarchy situated farther east than Nineveh or Babylon, and existing before their day of sovereignty. Some authors are of opinion that it was a Bactrian kingdom, others, a Median. Upon this the Bible gives no available information, unless we suppose it alluded to, as that of Chedorlaomer, the Elamite monarch. That this is not quite extravagant would be admitted, if it were generally understood, that the Elam of the Bible is not

exactly the country which we designate Persia. It is more properly Elymais; and thus is identical with part of the country included within what is commonly called Media. But whether it ever extended so far eastward as Bactriana cannot be known, and we would by no means venture an assertion whether it did or not. It seems most probable, however, that the rich valley of the Oxus, and that of the Jaxartes, were the seat of a powerful kingdom altogether distinct from those which became afterwards so famous in Central Asia. On this supposition being admitted some light would be thrown upon passages otherwise almost hopelessly dark. Notice was formerly taken of the expedition in an easterly direction, which the sons of Cush seem to have made, in opposition to the authority and orders of Noah, on his allotting to the patriarchal families their respective portions of the earth. After wandering eastward some time, they turned their steps, again directed their course westward, and at length reaching the plain of Shinar, dispossessed the race of Ashur, and seized it for themselves. But it is by no means improbable, that a body of them, becoming wearied of their tedious march, settled in the plain of the Oxus, and thus laid the foundation of the kingdom of Bactria.

The probability of this conjecture is upheld by various corroborations. All antiquity concurs in the existence of a powerful Bactrian kingdom, in the remotest ages. The worship of

this kingdom must have been the earliest form of the corrupted patriarchal system;—in other words, it must have been the Magian, if the Bactrians were a Cushite colony. In exact accordance with this, we find Bactria universally represented as the very cradle of Magianism, whence it afterwards spread to Media, and Persia. Supposing India to have been colonized not long after that period, it may easily be imagined that a communication between it and Bactria would soon be opened up; and accordingly we find that probably the most ancient line of commercial intercourse in the world was the course of a caravan between Bactria and India. From this it would follow, that the leading features of the religion of Bactria would be adopted by the Indians; as it commonly happens in the intercourse between two nations, that the religion of the more civilized obtains the ascendancy over that of the other. Now nothing can be more striking than the resemblance between the religious tenets of ancient India, as contained in its sacred books of greatest antiquity, the Vedas, and pure Magianism, as contained in the Zend-avesta. It would lead into a dissertation of too great length to follow out the correlative proofs by which the existence of a Bactrian kingdom, and its influence upon the religious institutions of India seem to be established. Suffice it to state, that admitting such a kingdom to have existed, its similarity in all its peculiar characteristics to those of India, of

Egypt, and of ancient Babylon, and even the form of the most ancient alphabets of Bactria and India, would all agree with the supposition that they all sprung from the Cushites, about the period of Nimrod, that primary position in the history of nations.

The direct influence of Bactria was little felt in Western Asia, because of the intervention of other powerful nations, such as Assyria and Media. The course of the Assyrian empire we have already traced; that of Media will not require so much attention. Towards the decline of the Assyrian empire the Medes made strenuous efforts to succeed to universal sovereignty. Uniting with the Chaldean mercenaries they at length succeeded in destroying Nineveh; but the iron grasp of Nebuchadnezzar retained the sceptre of supreme dominion too firmly for them to wrest it away. Against his feeble successors the war was soon renewed; and having obtained the assistance of the daring nomad tribes of Persia, led by their warlike prince, Cyrus, the combined forces overthrew the proud and effeminate Babylonians, and becoming united under the same chief, assumed the imperial sway of Asia.

Following a course similar to that already trod by the Chaldean conqueror, the brave Persian overran the whole of Asia, and extended his dominions from the shores of the Mediterranean, to the Indus and the Oxus. Whether he fell in battle against the Scythian nomad

racés of Northern Central Asia, as Herodotus relates; or whether in the midst of his friends, with the calmness of a philosopher, according to Xenophon, is of little importance; farther than that, while it is desirable to hold the truth in all things, it is natural we should prefer to believe the account given by Xenophon, as at all events the most pleasing.

His son and successor, Cambyses, subdued Egypt; but failed in an attempt upon Ammonium, the chief commercial emporium in the great Oasis in West Africa, and also in another upon Merœ, the rich capital of Nubia, and parent of Egyptian civilization and wealth. An attempt was made by a Magian to replace a Median dynasty on the throne, by personating Smerdis, brother of Cambyses; which succeeded for about seven months, after the accidental death of Cambyses.

The usurpation of the Pseudo-Smerdis having been detected, was overthrown by a conspiracy of seven of the chief Persian noblemen, one of whom, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, of the family of the Achæmenidæ, or royal family of the chief tribe, succeeded to the throne. The reign of this monarch was the most important in the Persian annals, as that in which the newly-erected empire was consolidated and established upon a well-arranged foundation, likely to secure it a longer duration than generally falls to the lot of empires erected by nomad conquerors.

Darius Hystaspes had, however, left to his son Xerxes the baleful inheritance of a war against Greece, which that proud and weak monarch engaged in and conducted like a person under the spell of infatuation. The collected strength of his vast empire was poured headlong upon the native land of liberty, and the best blood of Persia flowed lavishly as if for no better end than to fertilize the soil of Hellas. Foiled, beaten, and disgraced, the degenerate monarch fled to the capital of his wasted empire, and spent the remainder of his worthless life in the dissolute luxuries, or the wanton cruelties of the harem.

From that time forward the power of Persia was gradually weakened by court intrigues, productive of internal discord,—by the frequent rebellions of satraps,—and by all the vices that so greatly abound in nations hastening to decay, as diseases do in the human body, when the vigour of its vital functions is gone, or they have been tainted in their source. Still it continued to maintain a tottering existence, under a succession of monarchs, some of whom displayed considerable skill in the art of ruling by intrigue. Partly by such crafty policy, partly in virtue of its gold, partly owing to the splendour of its former reputation, partly from the dissensions of the Grecian states, which prevented their uniting against the common foe, the Persian empire continued to rule over Asia, till the time of Darius Codomanus.

The empire of Persia had now fulfilled its

mission as a ruling power. It had done all the good of which it was capable;—it had exhausted all its peculiar energies, political, mental, and religious;—it had begun to collapse at the heart, and wanted only the onset of external violence to crumble to pieces. That onset was at hand. The irresistible Macedonian rushed in the fury of his power, with winged speed against his paralyzed antagonist, smote him to the dust, and trampled him in his pride. In vain did the Persian assemble his countless hosts, glittering with gold and splendid raiment. The stern veterans of Greece and Macedonia remembered Marathon and Platææ, and mocked their numbers. The vindictive Athenian forgot not the fate of Minerva's favourite city; and patriotism and superstition alike called aloud for vengeance. Persepolis, the sacred city of the Persians, was wrapt in flames; and Asia saw herself at the feet of a new conqueror.

Such is a brief outline of the history of Persia, which lasted for about 207 years, from the taking of Babylon by Cyrus till the death of Darius Codomanus, 331, B. C. The various events of that period are so generally known that it seemed quite unnecessary to detail them at any length; nor should this very short notice of them have been given but for the purpose of retaining, merely as a link, enough of narrative to point out the connection of the deductions and reflections which it is our more immediate object now to offer [o].

The rise, progress, and decline of the Persian empire is fertile in lessons of much importance. It is also valuable as an epitome of all the history of Asia since its time. In its broad aspect, taken with a bird's-eye glance, it shews us a hardy nomad race descending from their mountains, first as mercenaries, to aid in the battles of the nations of the plains. Becoming enamoured of their new quarters they overpower their allies, seize their territories, extend their ravages on all sides, their ambition growing as their possessions increase. This career of victory ceases in one or two generations ; and they begin to relax into the pleasures and enjoyments of their luxuriant acquisitions,—the more readily that a rude people is peculiarly liable to be captivated by the pleasures of the senses. In a short time they acquire all the vices of those whom they so recently conquered ; and are then ripe for overthrow by the first half-savage horde that may rush in the strength of its free wild hardihood from its rude home in the rugged mountains, or the waste inhospitable steppes or deserts. Such was afterwards the course of Ginghis-Khan, and of Timour ; such, or nearly so, was the career of Mahomet and the Arabs, or Saracens, who threatened to overwhelm Christendom ; such was the process followed by Ortogrul, leader of the Turks ; and such the incursions of the northern barbarians who destroyed the degenerate empire of Rome.

From this two deductions may be made, one of

which, however, involves the other. There must be something of a peculiarly unchanging nature in the Asiatic character, which thus so constantly repeats the same round :—and since this round is so similar to that of Persia, may not the character of Persia explain the reason of this hopeless uniformity of repetition ? To answer the question implied in the latter reflection, or even to approximate an answer, will require a considerably minute investigation into the inner character of the Persian history and institutions, both political and religious, whether native or acquired. Let us then attempt to ascertain what was their own character, and what their usages among their own mountains,—what they derived from the Medes, with whom they first came into contact,—what they learned from Babylonians, Lydians, and other civilized but effeminate Asiatic nations,—what, if any thing, they acquired from their intercourse with the Greeks,—what was the value and nature of this character in itself, and what it availed as regards the culture of the world.

The various authorities which may be consulted for information respecting the character of the ancient Persians, are chiefly the Grecian historians and philosophers ; and their own sacred writings, which have been recently made known to Europeans by the publication of the Zend-avesta. Of these the latter source is of chief value ; but from Herodotus and other Grecian historical writers additional materials

of considerable importance may be obtained. Nor are the writings of the Greek philosophers silent respecting Persian antiquities; the speculations of the Magians having attracted their attention, and in many instances led the way to some of their own most refined theories. From Plato, for instance, we receive the following valuable information: "The Persians were originally a nation of shepherds and herdsmen, occupying a rude country, such as naturally fosters a hardy race of people, capable of supporting both cold and watching, and, when needful, of enduring the toils of war."

From other Grecian authorities, especially Strabo, we learn, that under the name Ariana (Iran) were comprehended Persia, Media, Bactriana, and Sogdiana, inhabited by a people originally descended from the same leading race, and speaking a language radically the same. Recent researches have led learned men to the same conclusion; and the Zend, the Pehlvi, and the Parsee, have been admitted to be dialects of the same original language: while the radical affinities between the ancient Zend and the Sanscrit point to the probability, that they were identical in very remote times.

The Zend-avesta indicates somewhat obscurely the route along which the migrations of that original race appear to have gone; and even furnishes incidental hints respecting the reasons of these migrations, which in our times are better understood than they were at the period

of their occurrence. According to the Zend-avesta Sogdiana was the first residence of the people of Ormuzd, prepared for them by that deity when the regions which they had previously inhabited had become excessively inclement, owing to the baneful influence of Ahri-man, the evil principle. But this country also acquiring an altered and uncongenial nature, they migrated farther west, and again settled when they arrived in Bactria. Subsequent migrations from similar reasons led them to Media and Persia; and as none of these migrations had left the former country totally without inhabitants, the language and people were thus propagated over the whole of these countries, called by the Greeks Ariana, and by the natives to this day Iran.

How exactly this agrees with what must have occurred soon after the deluge, a slight glance will suffice to show. The remembrance of that dreadful event, and even its consequences, would for a time induce men to make their abodes chiefly in mountainous regions, the valleys continuing many years uninhabitable by reason of their saturated state. As their numbers increased they would proceed along the course of mountain ridges, not yet daring to settle in the more level districts. But every thing tends to prove that a very great decrease of general temperature took place throughout the world soon after the deluge. This is sufficiently evident from the remains of tropical plants and animals

being occasionally found in high northern latitudes, where none of them could now exist. This gradual cooling of the climate induced the wandering population to migrate farther south, in search of more hospitable climates; and explains the language of the Zend-avesta, in describing the lands created or prepared successively by Ormuzd for the reception of his worshippers.

It may be remarked, in passing, that the decline of the earth's temperature after the deluge seems to be alluded to in the permission given to mankind to use animal food: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." The reason of this permission is obvious: the deterioration of the climate in every respect, and particularly the decrease of its temperature, had rendered food of a more stimulating kind necessary, and permission to use it was accordingly granted by the gracious Lord of all. In this case the language of geology, of medicine, of tradition, and of revelation are the same, incidentally agreeing where such agreement could have been least expected.

We need scarcely repeat our firm conviction that this people, whose wanderings are thus mythically traced in the Zend-avesta, were the Cushite followers of Nimrod; and that the last change of residence was that which led the ruling body to the plains of Shinar, where they found a country already drained so as to be habitable,

and more genial in its temperature, so as to induce them to seize it with the purpose of rendering it their chief residence, and the seat of universal empire. But while the leaders and the main body of the people continued their migrations from time to time, those that remained behind would retain their original institutions and occupations, unchanged by the modifications arising from change of climate and other local circumstances. From this would arise some difference between these remoter residents and the chief body, yet not such as to alter the leading features of this original character, which thus remaining essentially the same in all main points rendered the future amalgamation of the kindred parts easy, whenever they came into contact and interpenetration. Thus the Medes and Babylonians were easily united against the Assyrians; and thus, when the Chaldean mercenaries had assumed the sovereignty of Babylon, the Medes and Persians combined with equal ease against the common enemy.

Keeping these observations in remembrance we trust it will not be found difficult to explain the character of Persia, and the nature of its influence on the course of the general development and culture of the human race and mind, to which we now more immediately address ourselves. The view given by Heeren appears to us both historically and philosophically correct, and we give it in his own words: "We must discard the idea, that the Persian nation,

even at the most flourishing epoch of its history, was universally and equally civilized. A part of the nation ruled the remainder, and this portion alone had attained a certain degree of civilization, by its acquaintance with the arts of peace and of luxury. The other tribes continued in their original barbarism, and partook but little, or not at all, in the improvement of the race. Persian history, therefore, as it has come down to us, is not so much the history of the whole nation, as of certain tribes, or possibly even of a single tribe, the Pasargadæ. These composed the court, and it appears that, almost without exception, all that was distinguished among the Persians proceeded from them. When we contemplate in this point of view what Xenophon in the *Cyropædia* has told us of the Persians, especially as relates to their national education, we are struck by the greater degree of probability which his account acquires; the discipline which would have been impossible in an entire nation, being very practicable as applied to a single tribe.

“The above particulars would at once lead us to conclude, that in a country so constituted, every thing would depend on descent and the distinctions of tribe. As the tribes were distinguished by a greater or a less degree of nobility, so there was a gradation also in the different families of which each tribe was composed. The noblest family of the most noble tribe was that of the Achæmenidæ, from which

exclusively the kings of Persia were always taken. The same distinction of more or less noble tribes has at all times existed among most of the nomad nations of Central and Southern Asia, the Arabs and Mongols, and probably had its origin in the military pride of the more warlike, to which the rest were reduced to pay homage. The tribes thus distinguished by descent are often rendered still more distinct by the different modes of life they pursue, and hence arises the distinction of castes, which has so invariably prevailed among certain nations of the east. To judge from the examples of other oriental nations, this gradation of ranks prevailed among the Persians at a period anterior to their empire, and though we have no direct evidence from history, may probably have been anciently connected with a degree of actual authority residing in the superior tribes and families."

The number of the tribes, alluded to in the preceding extract, was, according to Herodotus, ten; and they were no less distinguished from one another by their differences of rank, than by their modes of life. Three of them were noble; the Pasargadæ, the noblest of them all, the Maraphii, and the Maspii. Three other tribes devoted themselves to agriculture; while the remaining four continued to retain their wandering and nomad habits, but are occasionally mentioned as contributing hardy bands of cavalry to the Persian armies. It may not be

easy to point out in what manner this diffusion of political power into families and tribes originated ; but the fact remains not the less certain. Were the Achæmenidæ the lineal descendants of Jemshid, the sacred monarch of the Zend-avesta ? This seems very probable, allowance being made for the Grecian mode of pronunciation, and the terminal syllable which they generally added to words adopted from other languages, and from which practice much confusion has arisen. If so, this would account for the superior nobility of that family ; and the principle of clanship would easily explain the extension of similar dignity to the whole tribe, who were accustomed to consider themselves the descendants of the chief, and thereby participators in all the honours of his race. Who Jemshid himself was, whether a historical, or altogether a mythic personage, the present state of our information will not permit us even to hazard a conjecture.

It is still an interesting problem, how a political constitution came to be gradually formed from the mere association of so many separate, and originally independent tribes. There are no accounts or traditions of the Pasargadæ having acquired ascendancy over the other tribes by right of conquest, the common mode of obtaining dominion among nomad nations. But when we look at the position of Persia Proper, in the immediate neighbourhood of more powerful kingdoms, and at one time under subjection

to Media, we may suppose a voluntary association among its tribes for their mutual support, and the chief guidance of affairs entrusted to the Pasargadæ, partly, perhaps, because of their superior military qualities, partly on account of their connection, through the Achæmenidæ, with the blood of Jemshid, their sacred monarch of old. There was thus infused into their constitution a new element, altogether different from anything previously existent in Asia. The king, in virtue of his descent from the noblest family, was an absolute monarch, in his own right; but the same nobility of descent being shared inherently by the whole tribe, gave rise to an aristocracy, independent altogether in point of rank from the will or favour of the king himself. From this it necessarily followed, that the distinctive nature of the Persian constitution, even after it had acquired the empire of the world, was absolute monarchy, acting by means of an aristocracy. The principle of despotism, in which both executive and legislative power belong exclusively to the king, had perished with Saracus and Belshazzar, after having manifested its malignity by reducing the people over whom it domineered to the lowest depth of thralldom and degeneracy. It now pleased the All-wise Disposer of events, to call prominently forward a nation among whom a greater extension of the political principle had been established; that it might be seen by the world, whether an aristocratic modification of political

power would contribute more to the general welfare, by diffusing its possession, and establishing numerous checks and limitations to its exercise. This is the new political principle alluded to in the concluding remarks of the preceding chapter. Its accordance with the position to which the general development of mankind had now reached, is very remarkable. There might still be one mighty empire, ruling over the greater part of the world ; but its rule could no longer exact that blind subjection which had prevailed in other and earlier times. There might, in short, be a monarch-nation ; but there would also be a dignified aristocracy of subordinate but still regal sovereignties. Nothing could be more suitable, therefore, than that the monarch-nation should itself present a similar aspect ; and be ruled by a monarch of supreme dignity, and a court of subordinate, but inherently noble administrators of laws, in the formation of which their own voice should be deliberatively heard.

It might have been imagined, that the liberty and welfare of man were secured by the adoption, and the universal prevalence of such a system, tending at once to control the exercise of despotic sway, to raise the dignity of court and nation, and to bring the blessings of civilization into more immediate contact with the body of the people, as well as to diffuse them over a larger surface of the community. What thus appears a better system was now brought into

action, and an ample field given for its full development; but whether it produced corresponding benefits to man, the impartial page of history will bear witness.

The national relationship subsisting between the Medes and Persians both disposed the latter to adopt the customs of the more civilized nation, and facilitated their efforts. Cyrus dreading the progress of effeminacy likely to result from this imitation, bound the Persians to their native land both by national institutions, and by the spell which knits men to the spot containing the graves of their fathers. The royal family themselves were obliged to retain their burial place at Persepolis, which thus became the chief sanctuary or hallowed ground of Persia, being in reality a city of tombs and temples. As a part of this policy the conquered nations were allowed to retain their own forms of life and manners, with the exception of what pertained to the art of war, and to occupy their own abodes, upon payment of an appointed tribute. This, it was thought, would preserve the military ascendancy in the hands of the Persians, and secure their possession of dominion. In a few instances the Assyrian practice of transplanting the vanquished nations into other lands, was followed; but the more common method of securing the subjugated countries, was by the maintenance of military garrisons in important places. This would of itself have led to the establishment of a military government, which must have pro-

duced somewhat of an aristocratic constitution, resembling the feudal institutions of the middle ages.

During the reigns of Cyrus and Cambyses, while the empire continued actively aggressive, no settled form of government could be established. Upon the death of the usurper Smerdis, the seven chiefs who had headed the conspiracy, debated respecting the new form to be adopted; and their debate, as given by Herodotus, is very remarkable. One of them is represented as proposing a democracy; but this must be understood in a very different acceptation from that usually given to the term. It is probable that he merely meant to give the government of Asia to the tribe Pasargadæ without a king, instead of to a king who should rule through the medium of an hereditary nobility. Attachment to their former constitution prevailed; and Darius Hystaspes mounted the throne, surrounded by the noble of his countrymen, of whom the conspirators became a conspicuously privileged number. From the reign of this able and politic prince is to be dated the internal arrangement and consolidation of the Persian empire. Acting in the spirit of his native institutions he established an imperial aristocracy, as the satrapies into which he divided the empire may be not inaptly termed. This division into a number of well-defined departments was indispensably necessary for the organization of an extensive empire, to prevent its immediate falling to pieces upon the death of its

founder. Something of the kind must always be established, where the country is too large for the management of one ruling power ; but the principles by which the satrapies were regulated, particularly as relates to their dependence upon the supreme court, clearly indicate their origin, and point them out as the legitimate offspring of the aristocratic principle interwoven with the original constitution of Persia.

The consequences of this system soon began to show themselves. The king no longer needed to burden his mind with the cares of government, which were entrusted to the chief officers of his court, and the distant satraps. Pleasure in every form, especially the loose voluptuous delights of the harem, so captivating to the inhabitants of eastern climes, became the sole object of the monarch's general attention ; except when the intrigues of the seraglio, and the fierce passions of women and eunuchs diversified the scene with the wild interludes of treachery and murder. It became the interest of the corrupt courtiers to exclude their king equally from public business and from public view ; hence the establishment of a most rigid and cumbrous etiquette ; within the tedious ceremonials of which he was immured in a species of gilded captivity. And to make this thralldom the more endurable to its victim, they threw over it trappings of the utmost splendour, and made it their study to refine and idealize luxury to the extremest pitch of excellence. And let the re-

sult be marked, as pertained to the sovereigns themselves. Its first example was in Xerxes, and him it conducted to public defeat, personal degradation, and a violent death. With one or two exceptions the career of the subsequent monarchs was equally unfortunate, embroiled during its brief course by the vindictive and base passions of the seraglio, and terminated with similar violence.

Nor were the effects less injurious to the body of the empire. Seldom indeed did the satraps feel identified with the people over whom they ruled, so as to make their interests the same. If at any time this did happen, the popularity of the satrap speedily awakened the jealousy of some courtly sycophant; and his death or disgrace was the consequence. The insecure tenure of their power and emoluments produced its natural effect, in impelling the satraps to extort as much treasure beyond the revenue due to the king, from the subjects of the satrapate, as might serve to fill their own coffers in the case of removal; or perhaps enable them to procure the means of support and protection, or even defiance. Thus the burdens of the people were increased to an enormous extent, by having many sovereigns, and many courts to support, not one of which felt necessarily any participation in their interests. Instead of benefitting the community by its extension of political power, and limitation of its absolute character, it was found to fetter and

degrade the monarch, and give to the people a multiplicity of petty tyrants.

Even these intermediate holders of power, the aristocratic body themselves, were not in reality more benefitted by the ultimate tendency of the system. The spirit of envious rivalry in all its forms took up its rancorous abode within their bosoms ; and every man in the possession of wealth or power knew himself the object of jealousy and malice to all who claimed equal nobility, and was ever haunted by the consciousness that his path was dogged by day, and his chamber beset by night, by the secret emissaries of those who thirsted at once for his gold and his blood. Thus universal distrust generated universal hatred ; and the smiling surface of a highly polished and luxurious society could with difficulty conceal the foul passions festering all within, and preparing its speedy dissolution.

Nearly two centuries had Asia lain in this miserable condition ; and thus time enough had been given for the possible advantages of the Persian political institutions to display themselves, when the word of judgment was at length pronounced, the Asiatic continent shaken to its centre, till the malignant incubus fled away, and another power of a different character came forth, to remodel and rule over the nations of the east. The peculiar nature of the next, the Grecian empire, will fall to be considered in a subsequent chapter, in which new and very important elements will present them-

selves, influencing the course and character of mundane culture.

In tracing the political development of the human mind under the Persian empire, we have been led to mention somewhat of its moral, or rather *immoral* development. We need not dwell upon the details of what every one must perceive to be of the most abandoned and deplorable character. If the dissolute licentiousness of the royal harem permitted the sister of the sovereign to become his queen, is it to be supposed that chastity was had in reverence by a people before whom such an example was set? Where extortion and rapine were the characteristics of all public functionaries, deceit and falsehood must have responded from all in the inferior stations of society. Where distrust is universal, public honour becomes impossible; and where tyranny prevails, and is placed in base and petty hands, national degeneracy reaches its lowest stage, and cowardice, treachery, and cruelty become its tutelary demons. Let it be enough to have merely sketched the horrible outline; and let us turn to our inquiries respecting the character of the national religion.

It is universally admitted, that Magianism, or the worship of the supreme deity under the correlative emblems of the sun, and of a sacred fire, was the prevalent religion of the ancient Persians. This, according to our scheme, is accounted for satisfactorily, by viewing them as a branch of the Cushite race, deriving their re-

ligious tenets from that earliest form of apostacy introduced by the first rebel, Nimrod. But those who have held different opinions, have been exceedingly puzzled to furnish any thing like an intelligible explanation of the multifarious and contradictory accounts given respecting the origin of the Magian religion, and the time when its founder, whom they term Zoroaster, lived. Hyde, followed by Prideaux, would place him in the reign of Darius the son of Hystaspes, chiefly because he is said to have lived during the reign of a king named Gustasp, —a name, however, which was common enough in the east, and therefore not distinctive. But Zoroaster did not assume to be the founder of Magianism, but merely a reformer of the abuses into which it had fallen. At whatever time therefore, he lived, the origin of that very early corruption of religion must be placed before him. That he lived in the time of Darius Hystaspes may be dismissed without scruple; as his own writings prove that not even the Median kingdom had risen into prominence in his day, the Bactrian being the chief with which he was acquainted.

Bryant asserts, that the term Zoroaster does not belong to an individual human being; but that it is a compound designation of the Sun-god; viz. Zor-aster, or Sol-asterius, the Solar star. He corroborates his view by numerous references gleaned from many various authors; from all which there appears a high degree of

probability that he is right. If so, then the confusion and apparent contradiction of authors respecting the native place of Zoroaster, and the time when he lived, may be easily explained. The name might be applied equally to the Sun-god, to the priest, and to the form of worship itself, or the people among whom it prevailed; and this would give rise to almost innumerable diversities in the statements of those who were ignorant of its true meaning. At the same time it appears certain that a reformer of the ancient Magianism did arise in a very remote age, whose tenets are contained in the Zend-avesta, and have been given to the public accompanied with learned and valuable comments by different German scholars, of whom Rhode deserves particular mention. Whatever might have been the original name of this Magian reformer, it was quite in accordance with eastern customs to give him an appellation designative of that for which he was particularly distinguished; and he may thus have obtained the title or cognomen of Zoroaster, in reference to his efforts for the reformation of that mode of worship, known by a similar name. The time in which he lived cannot be placed later than the eighth century before Christ; and to go farther back would only carry us beyond the period of authentic history.

The Magian religion, as reformed by Zoroaster, having prevailed for several thousand years over the most populous countries in the

world, is of importance enough to demand particular notice ; and we shall avail ourselves freely of the admirable abstract of it given by Heeren in his Researches.

The leading object of Zoroaster was to reform the abuses under which his country laboured, of whatever kind ; and to restore that golden age of happier days which the traditions of all nations celebrate. But as it has always been the character of eastern nations to build their legislative code on a religious foundation, owing to the unforgotten influence of the patriarchal system, when priest and king were the same, or were most closely allied, he also, after celebrating the era of Jemshid, the golden age of his country, promulgates a newly improved form of religious observances and tenets, by the close adherence to which a restoration of those happy days might be realized. To begin at the beginning, however, he thought it proper to set out with discussions respecting the origin of that evil, whose existence he felt and deplored, oppressing human nature in so many forms, and the extermination of which was the main object of his arduous enterprise. The doctrine of a good and an evil principle, the respective sources of all good and ill, is the foundation-stone of the whole structure, both of his religious and political philosophy.

This leading idea was, however, modified by the character which its author assumed of a legislator. He asserted the existence of a king-

dom of light and a kingdom of darkness : in the former reigns Ormuzd, the author and giver of all good ; in the latter Ahriman, the source of all evil, moral as well as physical. The throne of Ormuzd is surrounded by the seven Amshaspands, the princes of light, of whom the sage himself was the first. Subordinate to these are the Izeds, the genii of good, of whatever kind. The kingdom of darkness subject to Ahriman contains the same sort of hierarchy ; his throne being surrounded by the seven superior Deevs, the princes of evil, while an infinite number of inferior Deevs, are subordinate to the former, as the Izeds to the Amshaspands. The kingdoms of Ormuzd and Ahriman are eternally opposed to each other, but at a future period Ahriman shall be overthrown, and the powers of darkness destroyed ; the kingdom of Ormuzd shall become universal, and the kingdom of light alone shall subsist and embrace the universe.

Such are the principal ideas on which the system of Zoroaster turns. He did not, however, confine himself to generalities, but applied his principles to the different species of created beings. All that exists appertains either to the kingdom of Ormuzd, or to that of Ahriman, whether rational or irrational, animate or inanimate. There are pure men, pure animals, pure vegetables,—all which are the creation of Ormuzd ; and again there are impure men, animals, and vegetables, subject to the dominion of the Deevs,

and belonging to the kingdom of Ahriman. All men are accounted impure who by thought, word, or deed, violate the laws of Zoroaster : all poisonous and pernicious animals or reptiles, —which in eastern countries are much more numerous and formidable than in Europe,—with all plants and vegetables possessing the same qualities. On the other hand, in the country where the law of Zoroaster is revered, every thing is pure and holy ; so that his principles extend their influence not only over the human race, but even to the brute and inanimate creation. It is the duty of the servant of Ormuzd to foster every thing in nature which is pure and holy, as all such things are the creatures of Ormuzd ; at the same time that the enmity he has vowed against Ahriman and his creation, make it incumbent on him to attack and destroy all impure animals. On these principles also Zoroaster built his laws for the improvement of the soil by means of agriculture, by tending of cattle, and by gardening, which he perpetually inculcates, as if he could not sufficiently impress his disciples with a sense of their importance.

In the internal organization of his kingdom Zoroaster continued faithfully to copy the character peculiar to the despotic governments of the east. The whole system reposed on a four-fold division of castes ; the priests, the warriors, the agriculturists, and the artificers of whatever denomination. This is the order in which they

are enumerated, but he omits no opportunity of elevating and dignifying that of the agriculturists. It is to be observed, however, that this division into castes is not described as an institution of Zoroaster, but as having existed from the era of Jemshid, and which consequently the new legislator did not originate, but merely maintained. The striking resemblance it bears to the Egyptian system would justify us in ascribing both to a common origin, which is another corroboration of the idea, that both belonged to the ancient Cushites.

The gradation of ranks is similar to the hierarchy of the kingdom of Ormuzd. We read of rulers of villages, rulers of portions of towns, rulers of cities, and rulers of provinces, the head of all these potentates being the king. All, as subjects of Ormuzd, are supposed good and upright, especially the highest of all, the monarch. He is the soul of all, on whom all depend, and around whom the whole system revolves. His commands are absolute and irrevocable, but the religion of Ormuzd forbids him to ordain any thing but what is good and just.

These are the principal characteristics of the kingdom sketched as an exemplar by Zoroaster; the picture of a despotic government on the principles of the customs of the east. To this he added precepts calculated to advance the moral improvement of his people; nor did it escape his observation, that on the habits of the nation, and in particular on their domestic vir-

tues, must be founded its public constitution. The conservation of his ordinances was entrusted to the priestly caste, the Magians, who, under the Medes, formed one of their original tribes, to whom was committed the preservation of such sciences as were known among them, and the performance of the offices of public devotion. Herodotus expressly names them as a distinct tribe of the Medes; and this arrangement, peculiar to the east, is farther illustrated by the observations already offered respecting the priest caste of the Egyptians. The reform of Zoroaster addressed itself also to these. According to his own professions he was only the restorer of the doctrine which Ormuzd himself had promulgated in the days of Jemshid: this doctrine, however, had been misrepresented,—a false and delusive Magic, the work of Deevs, had crept in, which was first to be extinguished in order to restore the pure laws of Ormuzd. Zoroaster, therefore, must not be considered as the founder, but only the reformer of the caste of Magians; and to him accordingly must be ascribed the internal constitution of this caste, though it may have subsequently received some farther development. They alone were entitled to perform the offices of religion; and it was only by them that prayers and sacrifice could be presented to the deity. In this manner they came to be considered the only interlocutors between God and man; it was to them alone that Ormuzd revealed his will; they alone contemplated the future, and

had the power of revealing it to such as inquired into it through them.

On these foundations was reared, both among the Persians and the Medes, the dignity and power of the priestly caste. The general belief in predictions, especially as derived from observation of the heavenly bodies, and the custom of undertaking no enterprise of moment, without consulting those who were supposed to be acquainted with such oracles, as well as the blind confidence reposed in such pretenders, all conspired to give this class of men the highest influence, not only in the relations of private life, but also over public undertakings. It would be a curious subject of investigation, and one not devoid of interest, to inquire what connection there may be between the ancient Magi, and the modern fortune-telling Gypsies, who are evidently of Asiatic origin, and most probably Hindoos, among whom the religion of Zoroaster very early prevailed, at least in the kingdom of Cabul, and the Punjab. Not to follow a question respecting matters more curious than useful, and for which we cannot spare room, we return to our main scope, by remarking the intimate connection thus established between religion and legislation in the east; and which has continued as a distinct characteristic, notwithstanding all its changes, to the present day.

Without entering into minute specifications, it will be readily perceived, that the religion of Zoroaster was exactly calculated to suit a land

where the genius of despotism ruled, and to perpetuate its sway. Free investigations respecting the practical bearings of important realities could not be tolerated in a country where despotic government was established. But mystical discussions concerning topics on which certainty is not perhaps attainable, such as the origin of evil, formed a very harmless mode of exercising the intellect, and still more the fancy, thus turning away the public mind from attending to matters which could worse have borne examination. It was therefore for the interest of despotism, on the one hand, to encourage the use of this mental opiate; and on the other, it formed a resource to which active minds would willingly betake themselves, to enliven the stagnation which their exclusion from public investigations tended to bring upon them. Such has ever since been the character of the east; and from that quarter have originated many of the mystical heresies by which even Christianity has too frequently been disfigured, such as Gnosticism, Manicheism, the scholastic subtleties of the middle ages, and perhaps the Neology of modern times.

This perversion of religion, arising partly from the nature of the oriental character, partly from the influence of political despotism, could have no beneficial effect upon the public mind. The less cultivated, not being able to comprehend the subtleties of the mystical philosophy with which it abounded, would of necessity give a

literal interpretation to all its emblematical language and ritual. Hence gross and slavish superstition, so far as the mind was concerned, and the most unbounded indulgence in all sensual and voluptuous enjoyments. Even the attempted reform in their religious tenets by Zoroaster, could not produce any extensive or permanent good. It was an attempt to revive the patriarchal system, so far as that could be collected from tradition, and to adapt it to the altered aspect of society. But no merely human effort will ever reform a priesthood in the possession of political power. And as the whole legislative functions of the Persian empire were more or less biassed or conducted by the priestly caste, a stamp was then impressed upon the Asiatic character, which neither time nor subsequent events have been able to obliterate. The habit was acquired of indolent acquiescence in the course of events; slavish adherence to the opinions and the conduct of former times; a dreamy indulgence in those transcendental speculations which amuse the imagination without producing any troublesome agitation of those deeper feelings which might arouse the springs of action; and a lavish use of all the loose delights which a rich soil and genial climate can produce, or which a stimulating temperature and the absence of moral restraint present, to gratify the senses and enervate the frame. This was a condition too pleasing to the corrupt inclinations of fallen man to be readily relin-

quished ; and from that time even till now, this spirit of relaxed and voluptuous degeneracy has been characteristic of Asiatic nations.

Not only their mind and institutions were modified by their religious tenets, the same influence was apparent in all their course of life, public and private, and even after death. The tombs of the ancient Persians are very interesting memorials of their superstitious notions, and their scientific acquirements. Probably their earliest abodes had been caves in the mountains ; undoubtedly their earliest places of worship were caves, and subterraneous recesses, sometimes of great extent, sacred to Mithras, the Sun-god of the ancient Persians. Grottos have in all ages been held sacred to deities among idolatrous nations ; but there seems an incongruity in worshipping the sun in a cave. We are informed by Porphyry, that there was an ancient tradition among the Persians, that the chief deity had come out of a cave ; and as the chief deity was afterwards the sun, the conjunction of these separate superstitions gave a cave to Mithras. The story of Mithras having proceeded from a cave, might easily be shown to have reference to Noah, though disguised by fable. When the reformed Magianism of Zoroaster prevailed, the chief places of worship became the *πυραθεια*, open above, and placed generally on the summit of mountains, or lesser elevations. The sacred feelings still entertained for caverns rendered them peculiarly suited to be the tombs of kings

and great men ; and accordingly we find it a custom to hew out a cavern in the face of a rock, considerably distant from either top or bottom, in which the bodies of their monarchs were deposited. The most celebrated of these rock-tombs are in the immediate vicinity of Chehl-Menar, the ancient Persepolis; and there the chief of the Persian kings were buried. The entrances of these sepulchral chambers are ornamented with pilasters and carvings of remarkable elegance and beauty, and bearing distinctly the character suited to their peculiar religious opinions.

The ruins of Chehl-Menar, Persepolis, itself are equally worthy of remark. Instead of the huge masses of masonry, by which Egyptian architecture is characterized, these ruins display traces of a more elegant taste, springing from different principles. Being worshippers of the sun and elemental fire, they were not favourers of the sombre either in nature or art; but threw their buildings into a light aspiring form, where tall columns shot up their graceful shafts, supporting an ornamented peristyle. In others of their structures there was a succession of terraces, rising above each other; probably in imitation of the mountain scenery of their native land. It may be mentioned, that the celebrated hanging gardens of Babylon are said to have been built to gratify the queen, who was a Median by birth, and longed for the grandeur of mountain scenery with which her younger days

had been familiar. These ruins serve also to point out a difference between the character of the Persians in the days of Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes, by whom they were erected, and the Hindoos, so far as may be gathered from the nature of the huge caverns of Ellora and Elephanta, while there is so much of resemblance between both, and also the most ancient excavations of Egypt, as very strongly to indicate a common origin. To us it appears that there *was* such common origin, but that it must be traced to a period of very remote antiquity, —before the reformed Magianism of Zoroaster had given a degree of refinement to the ideas of the Medes and Persians.

Similar reflections arise in the mind on contemplating what remains of the literature of these ancient nations. The inscriptions at Persepolis are of the cuneiform character, and are certainly alphabetic, in contradistinction to the Egyptian pictorial, or the Chinese verbal character. None of these inscriptions can be with certainty attributed to a period more ancient than that of Cyrus; and their chief reference is to Darius Hystaspes or to Xerxes. Alphabetic writing had been known to the Hebrews, and the other nations of Western Asia, some centuries before, so that we are not entitled to ascribe to the Persians or Indians the honour of a separate invention, at least in idea. It must be owned, however, that there are some essential distinctions between the Indo-Persian inscriptions and

characters, and the early writings of the nations of a Shemitic origin. In the Indo-Persian, for instance, the writing is from left to right; in the Shemitic nations from right to left. If we might hazard a conjecture, we would attribute this marked difference to the different uses to which they were applied, and of course the different materials employed in using them. The Shemitic characters were originally used exclusively for inscriptions, engraved on hard materials, such as stone and metal, and were necessarily simple and angular in their forms,—and it is most natural to begin to carve and engrave from the right side, as may be seen by looking at the operations of a mason engaged in hewing and polishing the surface of a stone. On the contrary the Indian characters seem to have been originally used for *writing*, in the strict sense of the word, on palm leaves, and other suitable materials wherewith the country abounds; and indeed it has been proved by Father Paulino, that the use of cotton paper in India extends beyond the commencement of our era. These proofs of a separate adaptation do not prove separate invention; and the most ancient of these inscriptions cannot be traced to a date more distant than some centuries short of that in which the Exodus must have occurred. It is generally admitted that the Jews on their return from the Babylonian captivity made use of the Chaldee character in their writings; but the ancient Chaldee was in all pro-

bability of Aramean, that is, of Shemitic origin, so it would possess the same characteristics with their own more ancient alphabet, both in mode of writing and paucity of vowels.

With the exception of inscriptions on tombs and public monuments, the literature of ancient Persia is entirely religious, and is to be found in the Zend-avesta, almost exclusively. It cannot be denied that there are many sentiments of a highly moral nature contained within these writings; but the unfortunate structure of the system rendered it impossible for them to be productive of national improvement. The very essence of their religious forms tended to invest the priesthood with the character of a privileged order, possessing extensive political influence. This would not render them the more inclined to promote intelligence and true civilization among the people, as it is invariably found that the more extensively men possess power, the more eager are they to monopolize it. But in so far as the intelligence of the people rises the despotic power of the rulers decreases. To maintain their influence, therefore, they strove to keep the people in the lowest possible degree of unreflecting ignorance,—a policy common to an ambitious and worldly-minded priesthood, wherever such exists, in every age, and whatever be its designation. The more effectually to accomplish this purpose, they even encouraged licentious indulgence of every kind; while by the splendour of their rites and ceremonies

they gratified the Asiatic love of pomp; and at the same time, by making religion to consist less in doctrines than in ritual observances, gave full countenance to that central principle of religious delusion by which fallen man is flattered and betrayed—viz. that his own performance of certain ceremonies is of itself meritorious, and actively instrumental in procuring the favour of God. It was thus that the Asiatic character received that impress of multiform ceremonies, blind fatalism, and unrestrained voluptuousness, which it has ever since retained; and which even Mahomet finding it impossible to change, dextrously contrived to engage in his favour, by altering names rather than things, and slightly remodelling what he could not otherwise amend.

It would not be difficult to show, that the same cause has continued to produce the same effects in all ages. When the Romish church acquired political power it speedily gave a similar twofold direction to the mind of mankind, so far as its influence extended. The mass of the population it amused and gratified with its external pomp and parade, inducing them at the same time to attach great value to ceremonies, external acts, and all of which the senses could take cognizance. It reduced Christianity, in short, to a sensuous theology, or a system of theology adapted the senses, flattering the vanity and the self-esteem of man with the idea of merit derived from the external rite fulfilled and the formal observance executed, but leaving the

infusion of new and reforming principles into the heart altogether unattended to, so far as regarded the majority of its lay adherents. On the other hand, it encouraged among the more penetrating spirits of the clergy, and those who had obtained some education, the empty subtlety and strenuous idleness of scholastic and dogmatic theology. Hence the unmeaning and ridiculous discussions of the middle ages; and hence many of the peculiar terms still used in the language of theology, to the grievous embarrassment frequently of the unlearned, and almost always to the obscuration of the perspicuous Gospel simplicity. But this is a subject scarcely within our province.

One inevitable and very marked effect of such a system was the excess to which it carried every species of luxurious indulgence. It is not necessary to occupy our pages with descriptions of the luxury and effeminacy of the Persian monarchs, satraps, and courtiers. The Grecian historians furnish abundant materials for information on these points, and are accessible to every one. The effect in producing national degeneracy, and consequently national corruption, decay, and ruin, was most clearly shown when the millions of Persia encountered the few thousands of Greece, were beaten back with disgrace from the land of freedom, and utterly overthrown in their own, the abode of despotism. The high and luxurious refinement of the superior orders did not, however, extend to

the community. Nor was it possible that it should. The whole of the empire was considered as the property of the king, and under him of satraps and other official persons; but the common people neither enjoyed personal liberty, nor were capable of possessing property in their own right. The royal revenues were raised either by exactions in the form of tribute, or by the unjust seizure of property wherever found, and such like modes of despotic oppression. Taxation had no existence, because the very idea of taxation involves the right of the subject to that property, of which for the public good he *consents* to give up a portion. The lower orders were accordingly oppressed by all above them, from the sovereign to the meanest functionary who could claim some colour of despotic authority to trample on his fellow men. And notwithstanding all the convulsions by which Asia has been shaken we still behold a similar aspect in its population, of tyrannous exaction and abuse, on the one hand, and slavish submissiveness, on the other. The prohibition from all spirit-stirring thoughts, and the subjection to the desires and enjoyments of the senses, resulting from the treacherous influence of false religion, have spell-bound the very soul of the people, and their recovery from thralldom and degradation has become impossible, without the infusion of a new vital principle, which can only be done by means of the life-imparting doctrines of pure Christianity.

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They drowsily hug the chains by which they have been fettered in the dungeons of error for more than two thousand years ; and nothing but the knowledge and the reception of “ the truth ” can ever make them free.

We have already adverted to the political character of the Persian monarchy, and its adaptation to that stage of political development to which mankind had arrived,—viz. a despotism administered through the medium of an aristocracy, partly military, but chiefly hereditary. We have traced its destructive effects, in at once crippling the energies of the sovereign and trampling on the liberties of the people,—degrading monarchy, and yet producing a multifarious tyranny, without truly benefitting the aristocracy itself. Under the influence of a priestly-caste, similarly constituted, which might have protected and improved the body of the nation, we have seen the whole of Asia lulled into the languid torpor of complete mental lethargy, ignorance, and fatalism, in which they have ever since been retained by the insidious but effectual opiate of voluptuous pleasures. To shake off this deadly lethargy, and spring self-roused from its sleep of infatuation was impossible:—nay, though rudely shaken by various stern monitors since, Asia has not yet awoke. The rise and ascendancy of Mahometanism have been but the struggles of an uneasy dream, and produced no real change in the character of the many countries which have assumed the

creed of the impostor. Thus has it been fully proved, that when a nation reaches a certain degree of political, moral, and religious degradation, it cannot be renovated by any changes springing from within itself, but must receive a new vital infusion from some external agency.

The part performed by the Persian empire in carrying forward the mental and moral culture of the world was sufficiently apparent. Descending from their mountains as auxiliaries to the Medes, they brought with them the peculiarities of their own institutions, particularly their hereditary aristocracy. Being of a kindred race they very easily adopted many of the customs of the Medes, and indeed formed the whole of their court ceremonial upon the model of that of Ecbatana. In the course of their conquering career, first Lydia, with its boundless wealth and luxury, next Babylon, with its imperial magnificence, fell into their possession; and being, as Herodotus asserts, prone to imitation, they soon acquired whatever in the usages of other nations could minister to vanity, pride, or sensual delights. Some conception may be formed of the even studious attention bestowed upon all kinds of enjoyment, from the fact that Xerxes offered a reward to the man who should discover a new pleasure,—every conceivable kind of indulgence having been tried and exhausted. It was thus that the Persian monarchy, by combining the taste and

and courtly elegance of the Medes, the soft and refined effeminacy of the Lydians, and the lofty and aspiring ambition of the Babylonians, was the means of promoting the physical refinement of the world up to the highest degree of which it is perhaps susceptible. There is something humiliating in the very act of supplying those physical necessities which we share in common with the mere animal creation. And so long as the mass of a nation do not rise above the scanty supply of what is absolutely necessary for food, raiment, and lodging, it must occupy a very low grade on the scale of civilization. Till the wants of the body are tolerably provided for, however, the mind will not receive much cultivation. A certain degree of luxury is essential to refinement ; and the first stage of refinement begins what its highest cannot altogether accomplish,—the attempt to disguise what is necessary, and therefore humbling, into the appearance of being only pleasurable, and thus the ostentatious ministrant of pride. In this luxurious refinement the Persians were unrivalled ; and without ascribing undue value to such refinement, it must be owned to have accomplished an object of some importance in the culture of the human race. The earlier ages and monarchies had been engaged chiefly in the struggle with physical necessities and difficulties, and the development of the physical power of the human being, combined and directed by despotic will. The age of Persian ascendancy

was that in which the love of pomp and splendour, a taste for elegance and beauty, and even the gratification of mere animal appetites, were refined and idealized to the utmost, till they became a source of semi-intellectual enjoyment, and the very wants and weaknesses of man assumed the flattering aspect of modes and variations in the inlets of voluptuous delight.

This was the closing youth, the opening manhood of the world, when intellect began to assume the ascendancy over sense, preparatory to the departure of the one and the coming dominion of the other. Symptoms of a similar character began to glimmer on the orient of the world's horizon, even before the sun of Persia had reached its noon. The western expeditions of Darius Hystaspes brought him into contact with Greece, where genius was already beginning to burnish those weapons by which innumerable conquests were speedily to be achieved. Inflated rather than inspired by the demon of vain-glorious arrogance, and domineering pride, Persia thought to crush the infant Hercules ; and in her baffled and disgraceful recoil there was displayed an omen of the future, which at once foreshowed and led the way to its own fulfilment. The reign of intellect was evidently approaching ; and where could its throne be erected but on the shores of Greece ? All that could be done for elevating man above the level of the mere animals, in what regarded the wants and gratifications of

the senses, had been done by Persia ; and the world learnt, and never has forgotten the lesson : but this very refinement of sensual pleasures, if it elevated and idealized them, confirmed the tyranny which they too readily acquire over man. Had no process followed to break their rod of magic power, the recovery of the human race to a more spiritual existence would, humanly speaking, have been impossible. To prove this assertion it is only necessary to allude once more to the death-like dormancy of soul, in which Asia has slumbered ever since. It was now time for another nation to take the lead ; and since the physical nature of man had now been fully developed, to give full scope and ample culture to his mental being, if happily he might thus be rescued from his degraded condition. To trace the process and result of this new trial and expansion of human capability belongs, however, to the next division of our subject, to which accordingly we leave it. But the connection of the Jewish history with that of Persia, merits our attention before concluding our brief survey of the Persian age and monarchy.

The conquest of Babylon brought the Persians into immediate contact with the Jews ; and that in a manner very auspicious for the latter. Daniel had previously been held in the highest estimation by the Babylonian monarchs, and his interpretation of the miraculous handwriting, and prediction of the success of the Persians, would tend to recommend him to the

favourable regard of the conquerors. Accordingly we find him occupying a high station under the Median king, uncle of Cyrus, from whom however he could not obtain that permission for the return of his countrymen to Judea, which was granted by Cyrus, when he became sole sovereign, with the utmost readiness. It is more than probable that he showed to Cyrus that remarkable prophecy of Isaiah in which he was even mentioned by name, about three hundred years before his birth. This would at once conciliate the favour of the conqueror, and make him acquainted with the knowledge of the true God. It is deserving of attention that in the conclusion of the same prophecy in which Cyrus is named, the following remarkable language is used: "I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I, Jehovah, do all these things." In this passage is contained a direct refutation of Magianism, the national religion of Cyrus, connected with a prophecy fulfilled in that prince himself. It seems impossible but that such a prophecy, coupled with such a declaration, must have turned Cyrus to the reception of the true religion; and indeed the language of the edict in which he permitted the Jews to return almost indicates as much: "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord (Jehovah) God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jeru-

salem, which is in Judah." Be that as it might, the intercourse between the Jews and the great Persian empire was from that time sufficiently intimate to put it in the power of the latter to become acquainted with whatever was peculiar in the institutions civil and sacred of the former. Another element was thus infused into the process of culture through which the world was proceeding, putting it the power of its leading empires at every step of their career, to acknowledge the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, and submit themselves to His government. Without such knowledge the perverse obstinacy of the mind of man could not have been so fully shown; and the wisdom of God was equally manifested in revealing the malignity of the disease before the remedy should be made known, as in proving the inefficacy of all other means of cure.

It is not unworthy of observation, that those of the Persian kings who bestowed peculiar favour upon the Jews, were also those who enjoyed the longest and most fortunate reigns. Darius Hystaspes renewed the edict of Cyrus, and encouraged the building of the temple. Artaxerxes Longimanus sent Nehemiah to promote the same work; and the second expedition of Nehemiah probably took place under Darius Nothus. From Artaxerxes Mnemon they received few favours; but they enjoyed protection and almost uninterrupted tranquillity. These, it is well known, were the only kings of

Persia who were permitted to wear the tiara for many years in prosperity, and whose lives were not terminated by violence. Surely this might have taught not only the Jews, but also the Persians, and the world in general, that "the Most High ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth," had they not been blinded by the pride of their own hearts, and the thick mists of their own evil passions. The Jews, indeed, had long entertained the belief that they were themselves under the protection of a special Providence; and these occurrences might have opened their minds to the idea, that there existed no such impenetrable middle wall of partition between them and other nations, as to exclude the rest of the world from the protection and the regard of the Creator of all. But their pride could not brook the idea of any such approximation; and it was not yet the time appointed for the breaking down of that middle wall.

How much acquaintance the Persian and other nations obtained with the Jewish history, ritual, and especially prophecies, cannot be ascertained. It is, however, very probable, that they were far more extensively divulged than is commonly supposed. The authenticity and authority of their prophecies could scarcely be doubted after the remarkable fulfilment of those of Isaiah and Daniel. May it not be supposed that the general prevalence of an expectation of the appearance of a mighty monarch in Judea, some

centuries after, was partly the result of some confused traditionary remembrance of the predictions of Isaiah concerning the spiritual reign of the Messiah? And if such remembrances were to be retained any where, there was no place so likely as among the Magi, who absolutely dealt in predictions. The coming of the Magi to worship the newborn Saviour may be admitted as a corroboration of this view; and at the same time is itself explained or accounted for, as having taken place in consequence of traditionary remembrances of the prophecies respecting Him, contained in the sacred writings of the Hebrews. Thus were the Jews made instrumental, both by their prosperity and their adversity, in extending the knowledge of the only true God, and preparing the way for the coming of the promised Deliverer. The ambition of mighty conquerors, and the fierce trampling of innumerable armies, but served to smite down the obstructions, and smooth the paths through the wilderness of the world, that the "Prince of Peace" might approach with noiseless and unimpeded steps, in the majesty of perfect meekness. But evil had not yet fully displayed its destructive malignity, nor the capability of man been fully tried; to go forward to mark the progress of both, therefore, is what of our task still remains to be completed.

CHAPTER V.

GREECE.

IF the preceding parts of our undertaking have been difficult because of the paucity of materials sufficiently clear and authentic to be entitled to credit, there is at least equal difficulty in the attempt to sketch an outline of the history and character of Greece, arising from causes diametrically opposite. Utter but the name of Greece, and the mind is immediately bewildered by the multitude of great men, mighty deeds, and important ideas that crowd upon the memory and excite the imagination. Yet, as the countless myriads of stars that dazzle the eye on a clear night of keen December, may, by arrangement and patience, be brought somewhat more nearly within the range of human comprehension; so it may be possible to obtain a similar approximation to an accurate view of the character of Greece, and its influence in the general culture of the aggregate being, man. This, however, it is obvious can be accomplished only by adhering closely to leading topics, and disregarding details, however alluring in themselves.

This will be the more practicable, that the plan of the present work leads us naturally to pay most attention to the state and character of Greece, when it came forward upon the grand arena on which the destinies of mankind seemed the prize, and in reality obeyed the fortunes, of the conflicting powers and principles that alternately swayed the world. By the fall of Persia the tiara of universal dominion was for a time transferred to the brows of Greece; and upon her character would therefore depend that of the impulse given to the common mind, and the impress stamped upon it. But as that character had, like every other, grown by degrees, and received the successive biasses of all the peculiar and controlling circumstances around it, and events through which it had been brought, some notice must be taken of such of them as exercised the greatest influence in the formation of its general mind. This will cause us to travel rapidly along the path of its early history, marking the chief eminences, the *summa fastigia rerum*, to guide our bearings as we pass. And in this fortunately we need not enter into any minute researches, or make any attempt to display the peculiarities of that culture by which the Grecian mind was moulded, ample information in many a popular form being already before the public, and accessible to all.

Neither is it necessary to dwell upon the discussion of the question, what effect climate has in forming the character of a people; though it

might be thought to require some notice, as we are now to observe the workings of a character very different from any thing previously seen in the Asiatic nations. Indeed it must have struck every reflecting mind, as worthy of observation, that the European character is by far the most distinguished in every species of excellence, when compared with those of the other main divisions of the world. Whether the Europeans derived a richer endowment of human nature's noblest capacities from their progenitor Japhet than what fell to the share of the Shemitic and Hamonian races, we will not undertake to say, though it seems a very probable conjecture, from their invariable supremacy in all that can elevate the mind, and stimulate to lofty deeds. But even were that conjecture allowed, the peculiarities of climate must be admitted to have exerted no slight influence in maturing those distinctions already existing. In order that the human being should reach the highest degree of excellence of which he is capable, he must neither be borne down by difficulties beyond his power to conquer, nor enervated by the profusion of enjoyments unbought by previous exertion. Either extreme—hopeless barrenness or prodigal fertility—by depressing or corrupting, is alike hurtful to the true welfare of man. A soil and a climate presenting obstacles sufficient to rouse man's active powers for their subjugation; yet yielding abundant, and not altogether reluctant returns for the reward of his toil, would appear

to be the best adapted for the development of human nature in all its energies and capacities, physical, mental, and moral. Suppose a race of men richly endowed with all the higher faculties of the mind, possessing the most healthful constitution and the finest organization of the physical frame, and placed in a land where a moderate degree of labour was indispensable for obtaining even the necessaries, and where superior skill and exertion might draw forth many of the luxuries and enjoyments of life; and from such a people, placed amid such circumstances, the loftiest achievements of which human nature is capable may be expected. Such seems to have been the mental endowment, such was the physical organization, and such the happy clime of Greece ; and thus constituted it entered on its career of dazzling but deceitful brilliance.

In attempting to give even the briefest sketch of the Grecian history and character, it is impossible to avoid some appearance of confusion and repetition, so blended and multiform were the reciprocities of action which they exercised upon each other. In sketching the outline of the history therefore, we shall be compelled to anticipate its real progress as regards the growth of the general mind ; and in tracing the peculiarities of national character we shall be compelled to revert to topics previously mentioned. This apparent confusion of arrangement in the materials we have voluntarily incurred, for the purpose of giving greater distinctness to points deemed of importance.

Nothing definite is known respecting the Pelasgi, by whom Greece seems to have been first inhabited ; nor the Hellenes, who appear to have gradually acquired the predominance over the Pelasgi, till the latter either migrated farther west, or were lost in the more numerous race. Of the Hellenes the two leading tribes were the Ionians and the Dorians, and of them Athens and Sparta soon became the central abodes, while the minor tribes joined the one or the other, according to the force of circumstances or the assimilation of characters, till the history of Greece became that of these two leading tribes and their metropolitan cities. But it is of importance to observe, that between these states there existed a very marked distinction, which displayed itself in many characteristic particulars, causing, perhaps, their mutual rivalry, and ending in their mutual destruction. The Dorian, or Spartan character, was distinguished by a certain severe simplicity and grave dignity of demeanour. A corresponding impress was set upon all their usages and institutions, which all followed the bias of their native temperament. In this respect Lycurgus only gave recognised and embodied forms to what previously existed in the vague feelings and tendencies of his countrymen. From the same cause originated the aristocratic character of their political institutions, and their respect for superiority of rank and for age.

The Ionians, or Athenians, on the other hand,

were of a more lively, excitable, and changeful disposition. They possessed a keen relish for enjoyment of every kind, an exquisite perception of the beautiful, and a lofty feeling of the sublime; but an equally quick sense of the ridiculous, and a debasing proneness to sensual indulgence. Ready to bestow boundless applause and high rewards upon the performer of noble deeds, they were equally ready to cast aside, or trample on their idol of an hour, and to rush with intemperate eagerness after some fresh excitement or new favourite. Hence their disregard for, or aversion to hereditary privileges, and the consequent democratical form of all their institutions. Nothing but an incessant hostility, or at best a jealous and hollow truce, could subsist between powers so strikingly contrasted, so long as neither had obtained complete ascendancy. This restless antagonism, however, was favourable to the growth of each, as it tended to draw out into fullest prominence what was peculiar in each; and thus their mutual rivalry urged onward the civilization of Greece, by the stimulus of emulation in the two parallel lines constituting the main elements of its general character. They possessed a common language, though with distinctive shades of dialect, and in many respects a common mind and common interests. Yet the division of the country into such a multiplicity of independent states, and still more the constitutional differences and constant rivalry between Athens and Sparta, pre-

vented the possibility of any stagnation or dormancy in the faculties of the richly endowed, and finely strung mind of Greece, urging it forward to the fulfilment of its high destinies, and preparing it for the important position it was to occupy, and effect it was to produce, in the annals and general culture of the world.

Scarcely had the rude hordes of early settlers in Greece split into these two main divisions, and taken up their respective abodes in Attica and Arcadia, when they were visited by wanderers from Egypt and Phœnicia, bringing with them the kind and degree of civilization already attained in these countries. The natural ascendancy which knowledge possesses over ignorance, enabled these foreigners to acquire a species of sovereignty over the semi-barbarous tribes among whom they settled, as Cecrops did at Athens, and Cadmus at Thebes. Not only civilization was then imparted, but national religion received that form which it ever afterwards retained, though modified and refined by the poets. It may be remarked, that serpent worship appears to have been introduced by Cadmus, and was not unknown at Athens; but could not prevail over the more joyous spirit, and keen perception of the beautiful which characterized the mind of Greece, even in its earliest days. Willingly they received the deities of their foreign instructors; but following the bent of their own free and aspiring genius, bestowed additional attributes, rejected the

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gloomy and the disagreeable, and refined the whole creed into an idealized resemblance to their own mental character. The serpent-god survived in tradition ; but only as pierced by the arrows of their own Delian Apollo. The Egyptian sphinx appeared in the train of the Cadmian immigrants at Thebes ; but it was only to perish, mortified at the solution of her enigma by Grecian intellect. Thus Greece readily admitted the knowledge and the superstitions of other nations ; but under her plastic hand the crude materials assumed a polished and graceful elegance of which the world had previously beheld no exemplar. Upon whatsoever the light of her genius fell, an ethereal metamorphosis passed ; and it trod the earth, sparkled in the fountain, glided in the stream, dived to the ocean-caves, or soared to the summits of Olympus, in the bloom and the power of its newly-imparted divinity. Thus all the powers and appearances of nature were idealized by being first cast into the mould of humanity, and then with it immortalized and deified ;—for the human form remained the model by which the external aspect of their gods was shaped, and the human mind the type in conformity with which their attributes were conceived and arranged.

It is not undeserving of notice, that this constitutes an essential difference between the Grecian mythology, and that of the Asiatic or African nations. Among the latter, idolatry

sprung at first from the use of symbolical representations, for the purpose of accommodating the mode of instruction to the rude notions of the ignorant ; who being unable to comprehend the import of the symbol, paid *it* the direct worship which the more intelligent referred to the Being symbolized. The Greeks not only adopted the symbol, but bestowed upon it a separate personality, with appropriate attributes and dispositions, till it became another distinct deity. While, therefore, symbolical mythology might be explained and modified according to the progress of civilization and knowledge, it might have been rendered almost indestructible ; but the impersonation of it by the Greeks destroyed that evasive refuge, and by elevating it for a time into a more idealized existence, exposed it to the subsequent detection of philosophy, and to final destruction before the light of a simpler and a purer faith. The truth of this will be rendered more apparent in a subsequent part of our investigation.

It is to the poetical genius of the Greeks that this idealization and refinement of their mythology is to be attributed. And to Homer, above all others, must we look, if we would behold this creative energy in its highest exercise. But in the works of the same marvellous poet the manners and the deeds of the heroic ages are preserved in equal immortality, and thus rendered not only a perpetual inheritance to all succeeding times, but also a

living principle to influence and modify the character of all, whose hearts have glowed and trembled beneath the spell of sympathetic emotion. National religion and patriotism, or at least nationality of feeling, were thus combined, and lent their blended influence to the other causes, constitutional and local, which were operating in the formation of the national character. It is impossible almost to ascribe too much to such a combination, acting upon such a people. It shed an ethereal lustre on their whole being and pursuits,—ennobled their herodescended blood, not in families merely, but in nations,—and gave them a more than sympathetic intercourse, an actual interconnection with their gods. Their minds caught the *divinus afflatus* of poetry universally; and kindled into a preternatural activity, soaring at times into an elevation heroic and even sublime. While it permitted, and even encouraged the gratification of the senses in every possible manner, it kept the mind filled with visions of more refined loveliness and intenser delight; so that in the midst of the greatest luxury intellect predominated, and was ever ready to impel the silk-clad reveller to buckle on his panoply and rush fearlessly into the thickest of the fight.

The war of Troy had taught the tribes of Greece the effect of combination, even in times of great rudeness and simplicity. This important lesson was gloriously perpetuated by the

strains of Homer, and could never be unlearned. But an important change took place in the administration of government in consequence of the transfer of the sovereign power, almost universally and very nearly simultaneously, from the hands of their monarchs into those of the people. To this their whole spirit and internal economy naturally inclined. The multitudinous subdivisions of the country tended to equalize the inhabitants, and to render any deep degree of subordination quite impossible. Many of the ruling families became extinct during the Trojan war, or very soon after it. In some states the power had been seized by usurpers, and the returning veterans being unable to recover it, were compelled to go in quest of other places of abode. The spirit of colonization spread, and numerous settlements were made along the coast of Asia Minor, and westward in Sicily and Italy. But in new colonies a spirit of enterprise and independence commonly prevails with sufficient strength to give a greater degree of freedom and popularity to their institutions. The intercourse between the colonies and the mother countries soon produces a reaction in the latter, to a greater or less degree, according to their character and circumstances. In Greece it soon gave rise to a love of republican forms of government, which gradually became general. Here again the difference between the Ionian and the Dorian character made itself evident. Athens adopted a democracy, passing with ease from

the one extreme to the other, in consequence of the mobility, the fickleness of her temperament. Sparta retained her kings in their nominal and formal dignity, but gave the real power to an aristocracy,—we might almost say an oligarchy; and in this she too followed the bias of her natural disposition, which rendered her averse from sudden and extensive changes, and gave her a greater reverence for ancient usages and noble families.

It may be remarked, in passing, that our own times furnish us with abundant evidence of the influence, which the establishment of free institutions in colonies, may reflect back upon the mother countries. Who will say how much of the present ferment among the nations of Europe,—the irrepressible demand for freedom in all things,—is owing to the example set before their eyes, of the mighty western world, untrammelled in all its institutions, and apparently prosperous and happy in all its efforts? Did it fall legitimately within our province, it might be easily shown, that the extremely dissimilar circumstances, and even habits, of a colony and a mother country, render it quite impossible for the same forms and institutions to be equally suitable for both. As well might a father mimic the actions of his son, with the vain hope of recovering the buoyant heart and light limbs of youth.

It ought to be noticed, however, that there are essential differences between the principles

of colonization among the Greeks, and even the Romans, and those of modern nations. The Grecian colonies were generally either the result of some political convulsion, in consequence of which some leader and his faction were compelled to emigrate; or they were expedients for relieving the mother-state from the inconvenience of a surplus population,—the latter cause being by far the most prevalent. In the latter case it was natural that friendly relations should subsist between the parent state and her colony, but the colony would be free from any necessity of adhering to the ancient institutions which did not suit their new condition, hence their immediate increase of privileges and liberties. The colonies of Rome were chiefly mere garrisons, for the purpose of enforcing the obedience of conquered provinces, at a distance from the seat of dominion. Instead of promoting freedom, therefore, by their reflex influence, if any such were exerted, they would tend to increase the weight and clench the rivets of those galling fetters which Rome forged for the world, and which by a righteous retribution, were destined to rust upon her own worn and degraded frame. Among modern nations colonies spring generally from the spirit of commercial enterprise, settlements being formed for the purposes of trade, wherever there appears any prospect of opening up a lucrative traffic. These trading stations may be at first confined to warehouses; ere long the necessity of the means of defence gives

rise to the erection of forts ; and finally a company of merchants acquiring territory, ascends into the rank of sovereign princes. Having been long subject to such voluntary regulations alone or chiefly as they deemed likely to contribute to their own advantage, they naturally resist all demands made upon them from any other country, though that should be the mother-state, without whose protection they could not have survived through the period of their feeble non-age, and ungratefully refuse to repay her care and expense by a portion of their gains. This has been, and will always be the course followed by modern colonies, so soon as their own strength may enable them ; and the reflex action upon the mother-countries will always produce an extension of popular principles, and demands for the abandonment of time-honoured privileges. Of this America has produced one example, the full effect of which is not yet developed ; neither in its good nor in its evil ; and other events of a similar character will inevitably follow, in their time, overruled in the end to the welfare of the human race, though too often originating in the pride, selfishness, ingratitude, and other evil passions and intemperate conduct of both parties.

Of the Grecian colonies, those on the coast of Asia Minor were the most important, both in their effects upon the character and civilization of Greece in general, and in bringing them into immediate contact with the great Asiatic empires, and consequently with the history of the world.

The Asiatic refinement in all luxurious and elegant enjoyments was readily imbibed at Athens; and as usual, whatever Greece adopted she made her own, by imparting to it that peculiar grace and spirit by which she was distinguished. Still she could not tolerate tyranny, even over her Ionian colonies; and the efforts made by Athens in their behalf was the leading cause of those Persian wars, in which she made such stupendous exertions and gained such unequalled renown. The laws of Solon had given to Athens "the best form of government which she could bear;" and she had been successful in her struggles to throw off the yoke of the Pisistratidæ: Sparta had been completely moulded into the stern, haughty, and unyielding character which her lawgiver had striven to impart; and the lesser states, though each wearing proudly its own insignia of civic independence, bore a certain resemblance to the one or the other of these glorious rivals. Soon would their jealous rivalry have risen into open hostility; and they might have mutually weakened each other to such a degree as to have been unable to resist the power of Persia, had the shock of that gigantic monarchy been delayed till they had actually engaged in the strife. But fortunately for the fame of Greece,—or rather, agreeably to the wise plans of Providence, the Persian war arose to complete the culture of Greece, before she could be called forth to sway the sceptre of universal dominion.

The plan of our subject does not call upon us to follow the path of common history,—to traverse the plains of Marathon and Plataeæ,—to mark the naval trophies of Salamis,—to dwell upon the achievements of Miltiades, Leonidas, and Themistocles; and we gladly leave these glorious but bloody themes to the poet, the historian, and the panegyrist, better pleased to trace the efforts made and the trophies won in the less noisy and turbulent scenes of mental eminence.

The mind of Greece was now fully awakened. The consciousness of power inspired it with a noble audacity, and every department of intellectual exertion was cultivated with an incessant energy, and an indefatigable perseverance which seemed to mock at all impediments and boundaries. In the age of Pericles Athens reached the zenith of her glory, in arts, sciences, poetry, and political ascendancy; her course thenceforward sunk westering towards its decline. The fatal love of wealth, generated by the possession of the revenues of the confederates, and the intercourse with the Asiatic states, rendered political corruption at first practicable, and ere long necessary, even when the object was obviously for the public good. Corruption of all kinds followed; and the fickle democracy of Athens became equally incapable of self-government, and intolerant of any principles of rule or guidance except what emanated from their own vicious will. Hence the wildest contrasts in their con-

duct during the latter years of their republican existence,—fierce bursts of splendid daring, and sudden fits of causeless despondency,—bright gleams of transient patriotism, worthy of their earlier and better days, darkening down into the rayless gloom of universal degradation. Meanwhile the stern determination of Sparta was gaining for her the possession, inch by inch, of Grecian supremacy; and what she once gained she retained with unrelaxing tenacity. At length she triumphed over Athens; and in the very hour of her triumph caught the infection of the same mortal malady. With the spoils of Athens Lysander introduced luxury, and all its kindred or descendant vices into Lacedæmon:—the relaxing yet inebriating venom was imbibed with infatuated eagerness;—she reeled forward with giddy arrogance, trampling on the rights of all the inferior states in the insolence of now unrivalled power, till she was laid prostrate on the fields of Leuctra and Mantinea, and the sceptre wrenched for ever from her grasp.

The genius of Epaminondas won for Thebes the supremacy of Greece; but this rapid fluctuation proved the extreme instability of affairs, and the absence of any fitting power or principle again to restore and confirm a position of steady equipoise. At that juncture arose a semi-barbarian, cultivated into wily sagacity, but not enervated to an unfitness for any hazardous enterprise to which the most aspiring ambition

might urge ; and Philip of Macedon, by a long course of negotiations, and bribes and stratagems, and victories, became the undisputed arbiter of Greece. In vain did Demosthenes strive to fan into fresh life the pale embers of extinguished patriotism ; and Phocion attempt to rekindle in his countrymen, by displaying in his own conduct, the spirit of ancient heroism. The gold of Philip uttered a more persuasive eloquence ; and silver missiles won the victory, even before the appearance of his serried phalanx, "gleaming in horrent arms." Greece was bought because she was willing to be sold ; for not until her soul had previously become enslaved was it possible to rivet the fetters upon her frame.

All was prepared for the final immolation of Grecian liberty ; but it was fitting that a more majestic pontifex should preside over the sacrifice. The dagger of the assassin found the heart of Philip ; and the impetuous, aspiring, intellectual pupil of the Stagyrte seized at once the sceptre of dominion and the sword of conquest. By the field of Chæronea and the fate of Thebes he showed to Greece the utter hopelessness of any attempt to throw off his yoke ; and then immediately led her banded arms against the Persian, to gild her chains with barbarian spoils, and to drown the groans of the new-made slave amid the pæans of victory, and the loud shouts of triumph. Greece was enthralled ; but by her aid her conqueror subdued

the world : her own freedom was irrecoverably lost; but the destruction of Athens was avenged in the flames of Persepolis.

Bewildered by the dazzling brilliance of Alexander's brief career, it has been common to look upon it as the eccentric path of a comet, shooting madly athwart the cope of heaven to astonish, consume, and disappear. Had his expeditions borne no other character, he would have been a very unsuitable head and representative of a Grecian monarchy—a monarchy in which cultivated intelligence formed the predominating element. He was, however, no such vulgar conqueror. His first encounter with the Persians on the banks of the Granicus, gave him assurance of the result ; and thenceforward though all his motions were executed with almost incredible celerity, they were guided by a plan of the most comprehensive nature, eminently adapted to secure permanence to that empire which he was now engaged in founding. The possession of Asia Minor was confirmed after the victory of Granicus, before attempting to penetrate into Central Asia, because his basis of operations was thus secured, and the practicability of obtaining supplies established. Again, after the battle of Issus he turned aside to Phœnicia, captured Tyre, and obtained the empire of the seas ; thence proceeded to Egypt, made himself master of that rich kingdom, and founded a new city with a very commodious harbour, in order to command the commerce

of the Nile. Even his expedition to the Oasis, in which was the temple of Ammon, was probably undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining its value as a commercial station in the caravan trade. After the final overthrow of Persia he marched against India, well aware that it had been for ages the main source of both Egyptian and Asiatic prosperity, and determined to include it within his empire. Foiled in this intention by the mutiny of his army, he nevertheless sent Nearchus with a fleet to ascertain the best mode of communication between India and the Persian gulf; and having obtained accurate information on that point, resolved to make Babylon the seat of empire, because of its situation, which gave it both that central position desirable for a mundane metropolis, and the command of the best channel of communication with India by the Euphrates. Had he lived to complete the execution of this magnificent scheme, the world would have beheld the singular spectacle of a mighty empire won by conquest, yet established on the basis of principles all of which tended to peace, commercial intercourse, and general civilization, held together by the bond of common interest.

But the early death of Alexander rendered all these magnificent schemes abortive ; for his ideas were too vast to be followed up, or even comprehended by any of his successors, had their mutual jealousy permitted the attempt. Yet even then the course of subsequent events

served to confirm the accuracy of the views entertained by his profound and almost prophetic genius. Alexandria became the seat of a flourishing monarchy, a commercial emporium, and held no second rank in patronizing and promoting art, science, literature, and general civilization. The doom of Babylon could not be reversed; but the prosperity of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and Bagdad, as they successively arose in its vicinity, sufficiently proved the adaptation of its locality for the purposes of imperial government in Central Asia. By these two main divisions of the Greco-Macedonian empire, Egypt and Syria, its semblance as the ruling monarchy of the world was kept up, till it fell before the power of Rome, as she held onward her resistless course in the fulfilment of her high destinies. The contests between these kingdoms are not of sufficient importance to require particular notice; still less their hostilities with other and minor states. Their course was one of uninterrupted degeneracy, declining under the luxurious effeminacy, and all the kindred vices characteristic of ancient Egyptian or Asiatic nations, into the inert mass of whom they gradually sunk, were submerged and disappeared, so far as regarded their Grecian origin and character. The defeat of Antiochus, surnamed the Great, by the Romans at Magnesia, in 190, B. C., may be considered as the death-blow of the Macedonian empire, the supreme ascendancy from that time forward

remaining in the hands of the all-grasping Republic [*p*]. Quitting, therefore, the path of history, so far as regards the sequence of events, we return to the investigation of what more immediately pertains to our undertaking: namely, the peculiarities of Grecian character, the influence it had upon the culture of mankind, and the general inferences deducible from the whole.

Our attention has already been directed to certain of the most prominent events and influences, by the joint action of which the Grecian character was moulded into its peculiar form. The native genius of the people,—the pure air and bright skies which gladdened their salubrious and delightful clime,—the diversified, picturesque, and romantic scenery, mingling the beautiful with the sublime, placing the barren by the side of the fertile, here soothing the mind with the smiling loveliness of Tempe, and there elevating the soul with the grandeur of Olympus,—the sage reluctance of boon Nature enhancing the value of her favours, giving nothing without the purchase of previous toil, and then bestowing with a free but not a prodigal hand, thus happily combining the necessary stimulus with the adequate reward,—the numerous subdivisions of the people into small rival communities, furnishing the greatest quantity of excitement, and the most extensive field of free and generous emulation of which territories so limited were capable,—the separate energies of all these states

uniting to carry forward the civilization of collective Greece, under the assimilating guidance of a common language, a common religion, and a common foe,—this community of interests and of glory giving birth to a common council, and a common ambition, till rent into two factions, and weakened by mutual losses, she was no longer able to preserve her own liberties, and became instrumental in procuring for her own tyrant, the sovereignty of the world. Such are the leading elements and chief events which characterize her “strange eventful history.” But the under-current of her feelings,—the interior working of her heart, it is of still more importance to understand, if we would form a right conception of the causes which led to her eminence and her fall, and the lessons which her career is fitted to impart to the student of the human mind.

In all the Asiatic nations, over whose history we have glanced, the form of government and the principles of legislation originated in, and were modified by, the prevalent religion. The reason of this constant uniformity of source undoubtedly was, their being guided by the spirit of the patriarchal system, in which government and religious belief belonged equally to the chief of the tribe, to conduct and to inculcate. The first great nations were the direct and not very remote descendants of those “grey fathers” of the human race, and consequently retained the paternal customs. But as the world became

more populous, and migrations necessarily extended farther from the original seat of government and civilization, men lost that primary impress, followed any leader whose superior prowess or enterprise seemed to promise success, or had at least secured ascendancy, and thus religion was disjoined from government, the latter being left free to adopt any form required or rendered expedient by circumstances. In this condition were the Pelasgi and the Hellenes, the earliest inhabitants of Greece; consequently in arranging the very first rudiments of social order she was free from the presence of that powerful principle, which, while in its own department of unspeakable value, if admitted to the administration of any other, assumes the character of absolute despotism.

Not only the form of government, and other civic institutions, but the whole mental development of Greece experienced the great advantage of being relieved from the incubus of an hereditary and privileged priestly caste. All history bears testimony to the fact, that wherever there prevails an hereditary priesthood, every kind of social improvement is suddenly stopped in its mid career, and even the growth of mind dwarfed by the same fatal blight; because such a privileged caste can retain its influence unimpaired only by keeping public opinion in trammels, and preventing civilization from outgrowing their semi-barbarous usages. In Greece the priesthood had no such privileges, nor was it appropriated

to any races or families, with one or two specific exceptions, such as the Eumolpidæ in the case of the Eleusinian mysteries. This permitted the free exercise of the public mind on all subjects; and even religion itself partook of the refining process through which taste and intelligence were passing, till the rude fables of early ages assumed the regular forms of ideal beauty by which Grecian mythology is so highly distinguished. Had they possessed true religion, this disjunction between it and politics would have equally promoted civilization and secured the permanence of both; as it was, it hastened their maturity and ensured their ruin.

It has already been remarked, that colonies settling in a country not previously cultivated, always lose a portion of their former civilization, owing to the pressure of physical necessity, which at first absorbs the time and soon destroys the taste for refinements. But if mental refinement sinks under physical wants, the knowledge of religious tenets will depart with it, leaving, at most, but some dim and indefinite impressions respecting the existence of a superior Power, the object of dread or of love, according to the severe or the smiling aspect of general nature, and the sufferings or enjoyments of the ignorant and superstitious worshippers. Exactly in conformity with this view it is recorded that the first inhabitants of Greece were taught the names and attributes of the gods, and instructed in the rites of religion by the bands of adventurers

who came from Egypt and Phœnicia. These adventurers not only introduced the knowledge of religion, as it prevailed in their native countries, but also all the arts of civilized life in which they had made considerable advances, and at the same time established such forms of government as the rude inhabitants could be induced to receive. But their authority being of necessity founded on persuasion rather than force, refined and regulated the practice, rather than abolished the principles, of that wild freedom enjoyed by the race of Hellas. Hence the right claimed and exercised, even during the period of the early monarchies, by every citizen, of having a voice potential in all acts of the legislature; and hence the facility with which almost every state passed from the monarchical into the democratical form of government, soon after the Trojan war. The controlling influence of a leading chief seemed to be necessary, to collect the hunting or pastoral tribes into cities, and to accustom them to the rule of civil institutions; but having to a certain extent yielded up his personal, the Greek became the more jealous of his political freedom, and could not endure that the formation of the laws by which it was to be governed, should be entrusted to any hands but his own. This is one key to the peculiarities by which Grecian liberty is distinguished.

When we use the phrase, Grecian liberty, we ought always to remember, that there are essen-

tial distinctions between the meaning of the term, liberty, in the mouth of a Greek, and that which attaches to it among modern nations. When we speak of the freedom of Athens we are apt to forget, that if 20,000 citizens were in the enjoyment of political liberty in a very high degree, there was another population, amounting, according to Athenæus, to 400,000, in a state of absolute slavery. Neither political nor personal liberty could be obtained by these unhappy slaves; and though the Athenians treated them generally with kindness, still they were liable to the caprice of a most capricious body of masters. It might almost be argued that the Athenian citizens would be more properly termed, "a numerous aristocracy," than "a democracy," since they were maintained in idleness by the labour of their slave population, and enabled to give their attention exclusively to public affairs and amusements, or to private pleasures and mental cultivation. In Sparta the condition of the Helots was one of still greater slavery and oppression, and the treatment they experienced from their haughty masters greatly more harsh and contemptuous. There the disproportion of numbers was greater, and the cruelties inflicted upon the slaves were characterized by a degree of wanton barbarity seldom equalled.* That men, who themselves enjoyed and therefore knew the blessings of freedom, should nevertheless keep numbers of their fellow-men in a state of slavery, is one of the strange anomalies which disfigure human nature,

and can be accounted for only by admitting its fallen and perverted condition. It is however its own avenger; for the slave owner invariably participates in the degradation which he causes; and the nation that indulges in such a species of tyranny forges the chains ere long to be worn by itself. Let us hope that Britain has escaped the doom, by having, though tardily, removed the crime.

The new instructors of Greece, Cecrops, Danaus, Cadmus, and others, though natives of countries already considerably advanced in the arts of civilization, and especially possessing a priesthood, in whose hands were placed all the exclusive privileges of a learned and sacred order, had neither the power nor the inclination to impart a similar character to those institutions constructed by their aid. So far as their history can be understood, they were not themselves of the priestly order, and consequently were not fully acquainted with the secret mysteries of the craft, nor able to communicate more than the external rites and common narratives, performed and believed by the mass of the population. They could not interpret the symbolical language of their own theology, nor distinguish between the external aspect of the emblem or narrative, and the mythic idea or event adumbrated. What had been originally a sacred mythus in Egypt or Phœnicia, became when transplanted to Greece, the tradition of an actual occurrence, and was received as such by

a people already predisposed to entertain the marvellous, from the predominance of imagination in the national mind. But while these mythic tales were readily admitted as realities, and thus became the foundation of the national religion, they were subjected to a refining process in the alembic of Grecian imagination; and came forth purified and moulded anew into forms of the most delicate beauty, exquisite gracefulness, and sublime majesty.

In this plastic process the poets took the lead; and from the wild and extravagant language of unexplained symbols, constructed a theogony which they reproduced as a popular form of the national religious creed. Did our limits and plan permit, it might be possible to unwind the bright tissue of Grecian mythology, and point out the sources from which it sprung, or the abstract meaning concealed behind its vivid imagery. In the history of Saturn and the occurrences in the infancy of Jupiter, for instance, we might trace the leading events of the earliest patriarchal age. In the wars of the Titans, and again of the Giants, we might trace the conflicts arising from the rebellion of Nimrod, and continued or renewed between his descendants and those of the Shemitic nations, in a subsequent age, of which some notice has been already taken. In the peculiarities of the rites introduced by the various Egyptian or Phœnician immigrants, we might read the progress at once of idolatry and civilization in their

respective countries,—perhaps also trace their history back to their origin in the patriarchal stem. This, however, would lead us into a field, over the wide extent, and through the palpable obscurity of which it is not our present intention to travel.

This idealized refinement, this complete impersonation of the symbol, led, as has been already remarked, to the final overthrow of the national religion. During the youth of Greece, before her active intellect had approached maturity, it was satisfied with beautifying those ideal visions, which in a riper age it set itself to investigate. In Athens especially, this inquisitive spirit manifested itself, and under peculiar circumstances well deserving attention. So long as the strife for national existence remained undecided, the intellect of Greece had full employment for all its energies. When the baffled Persian shrunk from the conflict, dismayed and paralyzed, the same restless intellect achieved trophies of unrivalled splendour in architecture, sculpture, and dramatic poetry; but not contented with these bloodless victories, plunged into the horrors of civil discord, for the purpose of gaining a Grecian ascendancy, fatal alike to the parties by whom it should be gained or lost. Failing in her ambitious attempt, and compelled to submit to the superior power and more steady perseverance of Sparta, the active and sleepless mind of Athens sought employment in the wide field of philosophical

speculation, and began to lose itself in the subtleties of the sophists, or the equally unsatisfactory arguments, and ever-changing investigations of the philosophers into the essential qualities and origin of all things. Thus, as in the east, the loss of liberty and the want of a legitimate public sphere for the exercise of mental activity, caused recourse to be had to those speculative researches into the regions of abstract thought, which either terminate in dreaming mysticism, or, among bolder inquirers, lead to the dreary realms of universal infidelity.

The religious notions and ritual observances of Greece, intertwined as they were with national poetry and national fame, were too pleasing to the popular mind to admit of being openly assailed by the philosophical inquirers; so that even Socrates fell a victim to the false accusation of being a contemner of the gods. In secret they carried on their inquiries, nevertheless, and there could be no question what the result would be. Had the popular religion retained the practicability of being resolved into a system of symbolical instruction, under the figurative language of which doctrines of the greatest sublimity and importance were adumbrated, the efforts of the philosophers might have found ample and legitimate employment in analyzing these mythic legends, and produced perhaps a religious reformation, by discovering and repromulgating the long-lost truths of an earlier and a better age. But the deities of

Greece had been idealized into such a distinct individuality of form and character,—had acquired such a degree of separate and personal identity in name, attributes, actions, and entire history, that they must continue to retain their personality, or cease to exist at all. The keen scrutiny of the philosophers, when turned in that direction, could not fail to detect the utter absurdity of the fables which constituted the popular creed; and while they did not dare openly to proclaim their scepticism, they taught their disciples in secret to reject and scorn what they continued to treat with apparent veneration in public.

But while the philosophers secretly undermined, as if preparing to explode, the whole fabric of national religion, they were unable to erect a better structure in its stead. They were gifted with penetration enough to detect the fallacies,—not to say the monstrous corruptions, and glaring absurdities,—of the popular system, but beyond that they were unable to proceed. Some, in whose character vanity predominated, pretended to have ascertained the impossibility of arriving at certainty on any subject, and took refuge in the “cold obstructions” of absolute Pyrrhonism, or universal doubt. Others, of more honest minds and greater modesty, being convinced by their own consciousness, that in the constitution of human nature there did exist an instinctive faculty, which found its fitting subject in religious ve-

neration alone, impelling man to the belief of a God, and the desire to render Him due worship,—could not resist the conclusion, that there must be some Divine Being, to the reality of whose existence that faculty bears constant testimony; but confessed their inability to discover any thing whatever respecting His nature and attributes, or the kind of worship which He might regard with the greatest favour [q].

This was the utmost stretch of philosophy; and to what did it amount? It ascertained the weakness, the ignorance, and the guilt of man, to a certain extent,—though far, far short of the fearful reality,—but it could point out no remedy. It led its votaries either into the blank monotony of doubt and infidelity, or forced upon them the most melancholy conviction of their whole nature having sustained a loss and incurred a banishment, from which there was no hope of recovery, no prospect of return. It roused the popular indignation, by threatening to deprive them of their idols, having nothing to substitute in their stead. It thus aggravated the malady which it failed to cure,—strengthened the superstition which it shook but could not overthrow. The national mind began to assume a twofold aspect, ominous of growing disunion, and increasing rapidity in the progress of decay. Between the philosophers and the community there existed a secret but an implacable hostility. Each class re-

garded the other as a mortal foe : and each was right. The community hated the philosophers as subverters of the national religion ; and they were. The philosophers despised and detested the community as the enemies of free discussion, and the supporters of detected fables ; and they were both. At the same time, with characteristic inconsistency, the Athenians admired, followed, and enriched the sophists, gratified in listening to their “dazzling fence of logic,” and delighted with their skill in “making the worse appear the better reason.” And not the sophists only, but the genuine philosophers, notwithstanding their rejection of the national creed, recommended the observance of its injunctions, on the pretext of promoting the public good. Thus each division encouraged what it condemned, and lent its aid to strengthen its destroyer, giving the mock semblance of an equipoise, the elements of which were caprice and hypocrisy.

But this antagonism of philosophy and superstition obeyed the well-known law of extremes, and tended continually to meet. From the dreary emptiness, the desolate void of infidelity, the mind will gladly seek refuge often in the most extravagant superstition, and strive to believe any thing that it may escape from the famishing sensation of unbelief. In like manner gross superstition is the most fitting preparation for adopting the wild recklessness of infidelity. This again tended to maintain a

balance of influence between these seeming adversaries,—philosophy degenerating into infidelity, and passing across the narrow boundary into superstition ; and superstition soaring in the inflation of her fanatical excess into the regions of transcendental mysticism, whence a single step would place her within the territories of that pseudo-philosophy, scepticism,—equality of power being preserved by equality of desertion. If, however, something like a steady balance of power was thus maintained, it was only at the expense of a double proneness to degenerate, arising from the twin agency of principles, mutually hostile in one sense, but having an equal tendency to produce, and lending mutual aid in hastening the progress of, national corruption, and national decay, its infallible consequence.

There was another resemblance which philosophy and religion bore to each other, not undeserving of notice. The philosophers in their ardent and laudable pursuit of knowledge, travelled to foreign countries, especially Egypt, and made themselves acquainted with whatsoever was known in those ancient states. Now as all knowledge had long been exclusively in the possession of the priests in Egypt, and they had taken care to retain it by means of the mystical language in which they clothed their ideas, the key to the secret meaning of which was communicated only to those of their own caste, the inquisitive Greeks readily adopted a

method so flattering to human vanity, and thus divided their doctrines into *esoteric* and *exoteric*, or internal and external, the one sort to be communicated to their disciples alone, the other to be taught publicly. This distinction, while it flattered their vanity by the ideas of importance inseparable from the conscious possession of secrets, permitted them also to extend their inquiries into the most prohibited subjects, and to teach opinions the most repugnant to the common belief.

The institution of the mysteries had previously established a similar division between the public and the private doctrines and rites of religion ; and it had sprung from a similar source. These mysteries were all received from Egypt, through some of the various adventurers who settled in Greece in its infancy ; and were probably at first intended to furnish an explanation of that symbolical language which the poetical genius of Greece had idealized into a national religion. Hence the secrecy with which they were conducted, and which was indispensably necessary to avoid irritating the popular mind, by depriving it of its favourite deities. It cannot now be ascertained what were all the peculiar doctrines taught in these mysteries ; but it seems tolerably certain, that they declared the immortality of the soul, a future state of rewards and punishments, and perhaps, the existence of one supreme Deity, the creator and governor of the universe, to whom the other

gods were subordinate, retaining, however, their local dominion, where they were chiefly worshipped. These mysteries, especially the Eleusinian, were very famous, and the most celebrated heroes and legislators were ambitious of the honour of initiation. They were also under the care of the civil magistrate, and were in some respects an engine of government.

But while there existed this general resemblance between the esoteric doctrines of the philosophers, and the ἀποφύγματα of the mystagogues, they had the same direct hostility already pointed out as existing between these two divisions of the public mind and its instructors. The philosophers either denied the immortality of the soul, and rejected of course the doctrine of future rewards and punishments; or assigned such reasons for their belief as completely paralyzed any beneficial tendency it might have had in the support of public morals. Those who believed in the metempsychosis could scarcely be said to believe in the soul's abstract immortality, and their fanciful system was of too shadowy a nature to be capable of impressing the mind with any salutary hopes or fears connected with futurity. On the other hand, those who maintained the immortality of the soul by arguments taken from the idea of its being an emanation from Deity, could not possibly hold the belief of future punishments, death being the return of the soul to the Deity, and its absorption into the divine essence,

whither it was impossible that it could be followed by penal retribution. On the whole the tendency of the esoteric philosophy was to enfeeble or annihilate whatever benefit public morality derived from the belief in the immortality of the soul, and the hopes and fears of future rewards and punishments. The mysteries, equally with the better philosophy, inculcated the doctrine of the soul's immortality and a future state of retribution. By these tenets the minds of the initiated were supposed to receive more than an equivalent rule of moral conduct for any weakening which their reverence of the gods might have sustained in consequence of their discovered subordination in rank, and limitation of power. If, however, their views were true, those of the philosophers must be false; and both were equally repugnant to the common belief. Even the most sacred rites of heathen worship, and the deepest doctrines of heathen philosophy, were unable, separately or conjointly,—if conjunction had been possible,—to furnish any sure standard between right and wrong, or any principle of sufficient authority for their prohibition or enforcement.

The utter want of any sufficiently authoritative principle for the maintenance of public morality was sensibly felt by all who were interested in the public welfare. The only remedy which they could devise was one little likely to be effectual. Not only the actual, but also the philosophical or speculative legislator, admitted a

distinction between *truth* and *utility*,—between what was true in itself, and what was expedient for the people to believe. The philosopher and the initiated, as such, rejected the common forms of idolatry, with all their gross ceremonies; but, as legislators, held it inexpedient to impart such doctrines, and therefore inculcated the observance of the national religion. In the language of Gibbon, “The various forms of worship, which prevailed in the Heathen world, were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosophers as equally false, and by the legislators as equally useful.” How could they be real benefactors to mankind, who held back what they deemed true, and encouraged what they considered false? What force could their greater knowledge exert upon their own morals, since their public conduct was all one act of hypocrisy,—their public language a continuous lie? Lax conservators of public morality indeed must they have been, who despised the principles which they ostensibly inculcated, and never acted upon those which they secretly entertained. Each division of the more cultivated and influential part of the public mind contained within itself a deadly ingredient, sufficient for its own destruction; and their action upon the community, whether separately or conjoined, in hostility or alliance, tended to diffuse the lethal infection throughout the entire mass with double virulence, giving to the process of corruption twofold speed, rendering its final ruin doubly

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sure, and its chance or possibility of renovation doubly impracticable.

These reflections seem adequate to prove that neither philosophy nor religion, as they existed in Greece, exerted a beneficial influence on the moral character of the community; and also furnish some explanation of the reasons why it was impossible that they should. But it may not be inexpedient to confirm our reasoning by a brief glance at the actual state of the compound case. The effect of the national religion was abundantly manifest. Being a mere idealization and deification of human nature, it furnished no restraint whatever upon the indulgence of the passions, each of which partook of the general apotheosis, and had its unlimited gratification in the worship of its appropriate deity. It would even have been impiety in the votaries of Bacchus to be sober, or in those of Venus to be chaste. The consequences need not be dwelt upon, nor detailed at length in all their loathsome enormity. Suffice it to state,—what might easily be proved,—that every criminal passion or appetite which human nature in its utmost depravity can entertain, might there obtain unpunished, if not applauded, the most unlimited gratification, in the train, if not under the name, of some religious ceremony.

One peculiar effect of the national religion upon the state of public morality deserves to be mentioned. The peculiar rites in the festivals of certain deities were of such a licentious nature,

that no woman of modesty and virtue could appear at such times in the streets. Females enough, however, were found to join in such rites; and those who did were thus enabled to participate in a species of public and also mental intercourse with men of high genius, which enlarged their ideas, cultivated their minds, and enabled them to take part in public affairs of importance. Hence the cultivated females of Athens were courtesans; and the modest women, the wives and mothers, were only a better sort of household slaves, useful for rendering the habitation of the husband convenient and comfortable, but incapable of being his partner in any thing like terms of mental equality. The pernicious effects of such a state of affairs may be easily conjectured, to a certain extent, and could not easily be over-estimated. Without domestic virtue, public virtue is impossible. He who makes woman the mere object of his loose pleasures, or degrades her into slavery, poisons the fountain of pure affection in his own bosom, and banishes from his own mind the principles of liberty;—he sins against his own nature's finest and noblest capacities,—the capacities of loving and protecting—will inevitably incur, and must abide the fearful retribution of a wasted joylessness of heart and a miserable slavery of soul.

Nor does philosophy, with all her boastful claims, deserve less reprobation. Leaving the national religion to exercise its polluting influence upon the common mind, the proud philoso-

pher imposed no other and purer restraint upon himself, and too frequently proved his mental liberty by his physical licentiousness. The feelings of modesty were not altogether without a semblance of refuge from the most guilty excesses of the Bacchanals, in the assumed sacredness of that *furor* with which they were filled; but by some of the self-styled philosophers public decency was outraged in the grossest possible manner, and the gross outrage, by the shameless sophist most shamelessly defended! It was no unusual thing for such wretches openly to maintain, that the mind could neither be polluted by, nor was at all accountable for, the actions of the body;—or that the body was merely the slave of the *wise man*, and might be employed in any manner he pleased, without involving the slightest degree of criminality.

This gathering gloom was occasionally broken by transient scintillations of surpassing brightness. At length one luminary shot athwart the lowering scene, lighting it up with unrivalled splendour,—then leaving it to deepen down into ten-fold blacker gloom—Socrates, the glory and the shame of Grecian philosophy and Grecian superstition. In this singular man the world had an example of the utmost pitch to which philosophy could soar; and a proof of the inability of mere human philosophy to enlighten the world, or even to save itself. When he declared the necessity of some Divine Teacher to instruct mankind in the mode of worship most

acceptable to the Deity, he justified the oracular declaration that he was the wisest of mankind; and when condemned to drink the hemlock, as a subverter of the national religion and a contemner of the gods, his fate furnished the most complete proof of the deep degradation into which the popular mind had sunk, and the intense malignity wherewith it was filled, by the possession of that beautiful demon, its poetical mythology. Even when in the right, therefore, so far as unaided human reason could reach, philosophy was destitute of authority to enforce her doctrines, to overawe the public mind, or to afford support to her martyrs in the final hour. There is nothing in all the history of Socrates so melancholy, as the vague speculations with which his mind was occupied in his last moments, when his passing spirit seemed groping about the margin of that unknown region, into the palpable obscure of which its utmost strainings could not pierce. Yet in this melancholy scene there mingles a portion of the moral sublime, if we regard that hour and that event as those in which the necessity of a Revelation and a Mediator was most completely proved by the baffled recoil, the utter failure of human nature's most strenuous attempt, in the person of her noblest son, to achieve her own recovery, or even to foresee its scheme.

Warned by the death of his instructor, Plato either concealed his philosophy by the aid of the division into esoteric and exoteric from the

gaze of the many; or cast over it the brilliant disguise of rich poetical attire, furnished by a luxuriant imagination, so that if he failed to instruct, he avoided giving offence. Less gifted with the means of concealment, and of keener intellect, Aristotle withdrew from Athens, leaving her to the enjoyment of her sophists and her infamy. To trace the history and to specify the tenets of the various schools of philosophy which sprung up in swift succession during the years of her political decline, when having lost the sceptre of power, she directed the keen intelligence of her idle yet restless population to the subtle inquiries of rhetoric, logic, physics, and metaphysics, would lead us, widely and to very little purpose, astray from our subject.

In their public assemblies the same character was displayed, springing from the same principles, and leading to the same result. It was not without reason that Demosthenes complained, that they were accurate judges of style and reasoning, but careless as to the matter under debate. This was exactly what was to have been expected from intellect in its highest exercise, and having reached its utmost cultivation, but without the controlling guidance of any pure and fixed principles of morality and religion. Amusement and pleasure were its only aims, and whether its decisions were right or wrong was of no importance, provided its selfish gratification was secured. Thus the most intelligent was also, in every sense of the

word, the most depraved population at that time in the world. This was also according to the natural course of things; for however strange it may at first sight seem, it is not the less true, that intellect has no necessary connection with morality, nor does its highest cultivation tend in the slightest degree to make men more inclined to virtue than before. On the contrary, it is a sad truth, that taste, science, and above all, luxurious refinement, deaden our perceptions of right and wrong in almost the same proportion as they excite vanity and gratify selfishness. Nowhere was that displayed more strikingly than at Athens, which in this respect also may be fairly taken as an abstract impersonation, or fit representative of the human race, tried under the most favourable circumstances, and found capable of promoting only its own ruin.

But while in Greece itself full proof was thus made of what the human intellect could, or could not, do, towards the rescue of man from his fallen condition, and his restoration to one of greater purity and higher hopes, it was requisite that the mass of mankind should participate in the culture, and receive a similar impress. For this purpose it was necessary that Greece should be collected, when her civilization was at its height, and before corruption had made deep inroads upon her character, and her gathered strength aimed full against the heart of Asia. Here again we may trace the wisdom of the Omniscient Ruler of the universe,

in the silent arrangement of means the most skilfully adapted to the desired end. After the Persian war the influence of wealth, and especially of popular arts, or very distinguished abilities, began gradually to give even to the democratic government of Athens not a little of an aristocratic spirit. This was still more evident in Sparta; and when her arms imposed the thirty tyrants upon the Athenians, democracy received a shock from which it never again recovered. Pericles had allured the people to submit to an aristocracy of talent; the Spartans compelled them to yield to an aristocracy of power; and soon after the recovery of their liberty, they voluntarily suffered themselves to be governed by the artifice, corruption, and flatteries of an aristocracy of demagogues. Boasters, declaimers, and sycophants ruled the fickle mob with perfect ease, by gratifying their vanity, their taste, and their love of pleasure. The popular will continued to be the source of law, and the rule of action; but the popular will no longer regarded public good, nor gave itself the trouble to meditate the bearings of events, and weigh the value of arguments, in order to promote the common welfare. Such a state of affairs could not continue; for to render any government stable the executive department must render implicit obedience to the legislative, and the legislative must be the most virtuous body in the community. In a republic the legislative functions reside in

the people ; therefore public virtue is essential to the permanence of a republican government ; and public degeneracy will infallibly produce a political revolution.

The temporary ascendancy of Thebes prevented the universal establishment of governments moulded on the plan of that of Sparta, or at least on an aristocratic principle ; and her sudden decline left Greece in a shattered and paralyzed condition, ready to obey the impulse of any hand possessed of sufficient power to collect and skill to reconstruct the fragments, and reanimate the form. This was done by Philip of Macedon, and confirmed by Alexander. Under their influence and sway the empire of Grecia assumed the appearance of a mighty hereditary monarchy, modified and administered by an intellectual aristocracy,—an aristocracy owing its elevation and power to its intellectual abilities, rather than to the fortuitous distinctions of inherited wealth, or rank and title.

This peculiarity in the Greco-Macedonian aristocracy, was the result of a combination of events. The primary constitution of Greece rendered it necessary to give all possible encouragement to men of ability to engage in the service of the state ; but at the same time excited a vigilant jealousy over the growth of family and hereditary influence, lest it should become too powerful for the safety of public liberty. This rendered it almost impossible that there should be any real aristocracy other than

that of personal merit, which would fluctuate with every successive generation. Again, the difficulties with which Philip had to contend would necessarily impel him to select for the enjoyment of power, none but men who had ability and skill to wield it. In this manner an aristocracy was formed the best adapted to the spirit and character of the new monarchy, which now advanced into the world's arena, to beat down its antagonist, and hold its hour of triumph.

The suitableness of the character of the new monarchy to carry forward the world's culture is most obvious. That of Persia had cultivated physical and voluptuous indulgence to the highest possible degree of refinement,—even till the pursuit of pleasure had almost become a science, and luxury had held interchange of favours with intellectual civilization. To this empire of polished voluptuousness and idealized luxury, succeeded one of refined and self-indulgent intelligence, keenly alive to every species of sensual enjoyment, but giving to all the air of mental dignity, the real abode of which was in its own creative imagination. The one empire elaborated from out huge masses of dust and dross a well-executed counterfeit of the precious metal ; the other, as if in possession of the philosopher's stone, turned every thing it touched into pure gold. In Persia the pleasures of the senses were idealized by excessive culture and indulgence, into an approach to the dignity of

mental enjoyments; in Greece the mind stooped to the embrace of sensual objects, and degraded itself down to a less inaccessible semblance of equality. It was thus that the empire of Grecia was so well adapted to the task of taking up the rule and guidance of the general mind where it had been left by that of Persia, and drawing forth its latent powers by the magnetic attraction of her own.

Civilization is seldom or never gained by the voluntary exertion of a nation's own innate energies. Difficulties sensibly felt may stimulate to the effort to surmount them; but if there be no difficulties of a physical nature, the same effect may be produced by the rousing antagonism of rival nations. An unexpected hostile invasion may cause a lethargic people to spring from the lap of luxury, and perform exploits of great courage, and even of persevering resolution, if the necessity continue urgent. This is easier in a nation's earliest stage, than after it has attained maturity, and begun to relax into inactive indulgence. Persia was in such a condition when assailed by Alexander;—the assault might have roused her, had her energies not been completely extinct. As it was, the experiment was made; and though fruitlessly in one respect, it was productive of important consequences in another. It imparted a higher intelligence to the Asiatic mind, so far as it was capable of receiving it; and thus prepared the way for the possible reception of Christianity by

training the people of the east, not only to feel and indulge in the exquisite pleasures of imagination, but also to reflect coolly, and reason intelligibly. The prevalence of the Greek language was also of the utmost value as a preparation; and these points being accomplished, Asia relaxed again her languid frame, turned to her opiate, and sought voluptuous repose.

There was something singularly suitable, also, in the political circumstances of the two countries at that period. The hereditary aristocracy of Persia had failed in ameliorating the condition of the people politically, or in promoting to any extent social improvement. Its utmost merit consisted in the high refinement to which it carried luxury; and the graceful amenities, almost reaching the dignity of moral purity, and intellectual civilization, which it had imparted to the enjoyments of the senses. But in the pride of its own privileges it scorned the body of the people, and trampled on their rights, regarding them as born merely to contribute to its pleasures. It might have been supposed that an aristocracy of talent, owing its power to personal merit alone, and not limited to any privileged class, would have been a mighty improvement upon the Persian system, and indeed left nothing to be desired, as a system of promoting the interests of society. It was yet to be proved, that great abilities may qualify for great crimes;—that high intellectual endowments have no innate kinship with moral virtue

or political integrity ;—and that the man who wins his upward way from low birth to a lofty station, and to the possession of great power, is not unfrequently distinguished by the jealous haughtiness of his demeanour towards those into whose level he has risen, and his contemptuous and oppressive treatment of those from among whom he sprung.

Besides, as Grecian aristocracy owed its very being to the favour of the people, it naturally followed, that the man of some ability and ambition would court that popular applause from which alone he could hope to gain his object. But it is a melancholy truth, that he who wishes to obtain the favour of the multitude, will more easily and surely accomplish his purpose by flattering their evil passions, than by promoting their true welfare. If this holds true even now, when there is a pure and sacred standard of morality by which to test every action and profession, public and private, we need seek no proof that it was so, to at least an equal degree, when no such standard was known. Ideal public virtue, therefore, was incessantly violated or perverted by the force or the sophistries of unprincipled ambition, in its efforts to overpower or supplant all competitors, and assume the desired ascendancy. An aristocracy of birth may be coldly proud and overbearing ; but its influence is unattended with any of the rancour of baffled rivalry, since no man can choose his own parentage, and it can be no disgrace to yield to

that which was the direct arrangement of Providence. An aristocracy chiefly of talent cannot fail to be restless, aspiring, perhaps tyrannical, retaining many of the mental characteristics without which its triumph could not have been achieved. Stability is the principle of an hereditary aristocracy ; changefulness that of an aristocracy of talent. Under the one, social improvement will advance very slowly, or may be altogether stationary ; under the other, its progress will be rapid but unequal, and in its fluctuations may occasionally recoil. In Greece it furnished an incessant stimulus to the national genius, and operated greatly in calling forth that marvellous succession of statesmen, warriors, orators, and poets, whose united splendours form the galaxy of Grecian fame ; but it kept the public mind in a state of restless excitement, annihilated public spirit by splitting it into innumerable factions and partizanships, corrupted public integrity by open bribery and secret intrigue, till by the united effect of such a complication of evil causes, public virtue became an empty name, morality a jest, and religion a worn-out mask, scornfully displayed by the meretricious form of public depravity.

It will scarcely be disputed, that in Greece the human mind reached a degree of cultivation immeasurably beyond what it had done under any of the great Asiatic empires. Effeminacy and luxury arrested their progress, and kept them spell-bound in voluptuous repose, and fet-

tered to their silken couches by the rosy bands of soft and sensual indulgence. Unguided, un-governed intellect in Greece solved the enigmas of superstition, reversed the spells of poetic mythology, introduced the bands of conventional morality, evoked the guileful demon of sophistry, and arrayed it in the bright tissue of deceptive logic, then offered before its shrine the sacrifice of national faith, virtue, and honour. This surely was ample proof, that intellect of the highest order, animating a frame of the most exquisite organization, and placed amid circumstances the most favourable for ensuring its completest development, would in the end, produce evil of the deepest dye, and entail the most hopeless degradation of body and mind upon the human race, without the controlling guidance of some principle of superior purity, of which the mind of man appeared to be hitherto destitute. Still it might be urged, that there might be yet one resource which had not been tried ; and that until it had it would be too soon to despair of man's efforts to govern himself, curb vice, encourage virtue, and establish pure morality, by his own unaided powers. The attempt had indeed failed in Egypt, Assyria, Persia, and Greece; but in the first three instances defective institutions, want of liberty, the enervating influence of climate, and the voluptuous character of the people, sufficiently accounted for the failure; and in the last, so much of similar causes were in operation, partly na-

tive, partly arising from their vicinity to, intercourse with, and imitation of, Asia, that a similar result was almost inevitable. Imagination, too, by which Greece is characterized, is by no means a faculty likely to confer stability where it predominated; but that a nation of equal intellect, remote from Asia, trained to self-dependence in the midst of great, yet superable difficulties, and of less imaginative character, would be almost sure to solve the problem, and point out to man the path of self-restoration. Such a nation was prepared, that a final experiment might be made, and the utmost resources of the race of Adam called into action, fairly tried, and man taught, by their utter and final failure, humbly to acknowledge, that all his sufficiency is of God.

While the nations of the world were thus acting their respective parts in the processional movement of that awfully important drama, guided by the hand of Providence, and rapidly approaching the solemn catastrophe, the Jews were again placed within the influence of these gigantic events. The favour of the Persian monarchs had restored them to their native land, and enabled them to rebuild their temple. When Alexander turned aside to secure his basis of operations by subduing Asia Minor and Phœnicia, before he should strike at the heart of the continent, he came necessarily into the vicinity of Jerusalem, and sent to demand the surrender of that city. The Jews declared their

inability to comply because of the allegiance still due to Darius; and when Alexander marched against Jerusalem in order to chastise their presumption, the high priest, Jaddua, in obedience to a dream, went out to meet him, clad in the robes of his sacred office. The sight of Jaddua immediately recalled to Alexander's recollection a dream, in which before setting out from Dios in Macedonia he had been encouraged to undertake the expedition and promised success by the vision of a person arrayed in similar vestments. Upon this he did reverence to the name of God, written on the frontal of the high priest's turban, and having accompanied him to Jerusalem, was there shown the prophecies of Daniel, in which his conquest is clearly predicted. This induced him to confer peculiar privileges on the Jews, and to grant them special exemption from certain taxes and other public burdens. It may also have led the way to the favourable light in which the Jews were for some time regarded, and the good treatment they experienced from his successors, the sovereigns of Egypt and Syria, between whose territories Judea was situated. By one of them, indeed, Antiochus Epiphanes, they were treated with the utmost barbarity, and sustained unprecedented cruelties with a determined heroism of spirit, to which their former history furnishes few parallels.

Speedily about to be scattered over the world, dispersed to all the winds of heaven, it was necessary that their national spirit should be roused

to its utmost pitch, and its energies called into most strenuous action, that it might be prepared for the pining banishment of ages, into which it was on the eve of being driven. For it is with a nation as with an individual;—we cling with fondest and firmest tenacity to that for which we have most deeply suffered. The heart of a people dwells with stronger and more fervent attachment on the scenes of martyrdom, and preserves their grey memorials on the bleak heath and in the lonely glen with greater care than the proudest trophies of its most glorious battle-fields:—nay even the patriot who falls earns a more lasting fame than he who survives and triumphs.

But another important end was also subserved by the frequent intercourse between the Jews and their mighty neighbours. The Persians had been rendered so much acquainted with the tenets of the Jews, and had seen such proofs of their divine origin in the fulfilment of predictions in which they were themselves concerned, that their rejection of divine revelation after such evidence might justly be held a national crime. Thus were they left without excuse. Again, to Alexander a similar opportunity was vouchsafed, and the light of pure and holy religious truth shed its eternal glories for once at least before his eyes. In the din of arms, and the glare of conquest, he forgot by whose hand he was led; and vainly dreamt of establishing universal dominion, and rendering Babylon the seat of em-

pire. He perished, even "when he was strong," and his kingdom was divided "toward the four winds of heaven." With the general tenor of the Hebrew prophecies Alexander's immediate successors were partially acquainted, and to that perhaps was partly owing the favour they at first experienced from the Lagidæ and the Seleucidæ. The civilization of the Greco-Macedonian kingdoms continued for a considerable time to produce a beneficial effect upon the general character of the nations under their sway; but they gradually sunk into the corrupt mass of Asiatic luxury, effeminacy, tyranny, and degeneracy, becoming unjust and cruel in proportion to their growing depravity and weakness.

The land of Judea was still a land of marvels. At one time its despised inhabitants, under the command of the heroic Maccabees, routed the disciplined Syrian armies, though vastly superior in numbers; at another the impious intruder into the temple was struck with sacred horrors, and fled in frantic alarm from visionary assailants. A succession of such miraculous incidents served to mark it as a sacred land; and to keep alive and circulate the indefinite prediction, that it was yet to be the scene of mighty events, in which the destinies of the whole world were to be involved.

Had either Jew or Greek understood the character of the position they at that time occupied in the providential economy of the world, with what awful expectation would they have girded

up their loins and prepared for the crisis, now looming on the dim-seen billow of the advancing tide of time! To meet and bow before the Messenger of the Covenant would have been to ensure their participation in His triumphs; to reject Him, was to reject their own deliverance, and to fill up the measure of their guilt, and the cup of divine vengeance. They faintly heard, indeed, the distant accents of a still small voice; but they misunderstood or disregarded its solemn warnings, and thought but of the brazen clangor of trumpets, announcing the triumphal approach of a mighty conqueror, in all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of *glorious* war"—so styled even yet by the savage eloquence of genius exulting in the cruel grandeur of civilized murder. One more effort of the mustered energies of man was to "overturn" the nations;—one more imperial struggle was to shake the world and grind to powder its thrones and seats of power;—one more fiery trial was to be made to fuse the collected elements of the human race, and casting them into one new and strong mould to reproduce a renovated being. That last effort, struggle, fiery trial, made and found abortive, then would it be manifest, that nothing less than Divine interposition could save mankind from utter and final ruin; and then in the moment of man's extremity and hopelessness it would be seen to be "the fulness of time" for Him to appear, who is "Mighty to save," "even to the uttermost."

CHAPTER VI.

ROME.

WHAT credit may be due to the romantic narratives of Rome's early history we are not called upon to determine. That its most ancient records should wear to some extent a fabulous aspect, is no more than what takes place in every nation, when recourse is had to materials indistinctly preserved by tradition. Those dim regions of remote antiquity are also the very home of imagination, which delights to bestow poetic splendour and poetic dignity upon deeds and heroes whose names have alone survived, and the faint memory of whose actions only seems to people the shadowy land of the nation's half-forgotten infancy. Yet to reject those traditions altogether on account of their fabulous air, would be the very pedantry of hypercriticism. Very few such traditions ever sprung into being, much less obtained general credence, without some foundation in fact ; and it is the part of a judicious historian to discriminate between the fact and the fictitious drapery thrown around it,—to extricate the germ of truth from the gorgeous or grotesque coatings

of fable within which it is enveloped,—and thus to promote our knowledge of the real, instead of throwing away the whole because of the unreal disguise it unhappily, though very naturally, wears. We cannot therefore entirely agree with the spirit of Niebuhr's inquiries into the early history of Rome, and are very far from concurring in all his conclusions. The truth is, that the infancy of a nation must abound with the exciting, and be detailed in the spirit of the marvellous, these being the only parts of its situation and character at that time in existence. And there could be few more convincing proofs, from internal evidence, of the falsehood of any history, purporting to be that of a nation's youth, than its having the air of severe and unadorned adherence to simple facts, which these self-styled philosophical historians most *unphilosophically* demand. But we are not called upon to enter into the controversy between ancient historians and their modern critics, and shall content ourselves with following a middle course, neither admitting all of the one, nor rejecting all which the others reject, there being enough for our present purpose left undisputed.

It appears that Rome was founded by a colony from Alba Longa, an adjoining city of Latium, about 754, B. C. Its primary form of government was monarchical, the sovereignty being held by the chief, or leader of the colony; and its first inhabitants were probably little

better than banditti, and their city a strong hold in which to secure their persons and their plunder. They were very speedily engaged in hostilities with their neighbours, and having been successful, began to form themselves into a community, under the guidance of a regular system of laws. There is nothing which so certainly gives birth to the social compact as the possession of property, by the immediate necessity of devising means for its secure appropriation. Hence with every accession of territory the Roman mind advanced in a species of civilization, eminently calculated to prepare it for its future career. Almost every war was terminated by a conquest. These wars were indeed of a very petty nature for a time, being waged by one small city against another of equally diminutive compass; yet they bore a proportionate importance to each other, if estimated by a properly graduated scale. The subjugation of a town, with its small territory, was usually followed by the seizure of one-third of its land by the conquerors. This became public land, and was occupied by the people for agricultural purposes, on a kind of state compact; the chief terms of which were,—that the occupiers should pay one-tenth of the produce by way of rent,—and that the whole might be resumed by the state, the farmers being a kind of tenants-at-will. The vanquished state was allowed to retain the remainder; and was generally admitted to the rights of citizenship.

For a time the effect of this process was highly beneficial, especially to the conquerors. It immediately more than supplied the loss of those citizens who fell in the contest ; so that every war gave to Rome not only an increase of territory, but also an increase of population, whose interests speedily became identified with those of the ambitious people into whom they had merged. If the new accession had sustained a loss from the seizure of a portion of their former lands, their only prospect of a recompense consisted in another war, another conquest, and another partition of captured lands. Thus the aggressive spirit increased, growing by what it fed on, and becoming more insatiable in proportion to the enlargement of its power to gratify its cravings. The means and the inclination thus advanced together with equal strides ; and in this respect the spirit of Roman conquests was influenced by a principle closely analogous to that which characterized the rise of the eastern empires. At the same time the partition and allotment of land introduced a principle of a very different nature, tending to ensure the permanence of every acquisition. This unusual combination of aggressive and consolidating principles augured ill for the separate independence of the neighbouring states ; yet they had not the foresight to form a confederacy for mutual protection sufficiently strong to curb the growth of the common foe. This very principle, however,—

the partial division of the conquered lands,—so beneficial to the extension of Roman power at first, became in the days of the republic a rock on which its fortunes had almost suffered shipwreck.

An elective monarchy is one of the worst forms of government, both from the factions and intrigues to which it gives occasion, and the insecurity in which it continually totters. It encourages indeed the growth of liberty in one branch of the community,—that, namely, in which the elective power resides ; but it introduces such disorders as to lead either to its own dissolution, or to the overthrow of the nation where it prevails. In Rome the attempt was made by the Tarquin family to render it hereditary, which gave offence to the patricians, the electing body ; and availing themselves of the criminal conduct of one of the princes of the reigning family to excite the feelings of popular indignation, they expelled the king, and converted the form of government into that of an aristocratic republic. The division of the people into patricians and plebeians, and the formation of the senate wholly from the patricians, were perfectly adapted to a monarchical government, which requires a nobility. The organization of the people into tribes and centuries, and the constitution of popular assemblies, especially the *comitia centuriata*, in which by the mode of voting the people enjoyed the semblance of political power, while the patricians possessed the

substance, might also have suited a monarchy, and might have approximated to a mixed form of government, subsisting by the balance of opposite principles. But the expulsion of the king, and the changes to which it gave rise, introduced a deeper cause of contention.

In the very first attempt to expel the king it was necessary for the leaders to have recourse to the aid of the people, and consequently to court their favour by an extension of their privileges. Still the chief power remained in the hands of the patricians, from among whom alone the consuls could be chosen ; and who, by the establishment of hereditary names, had devised an easy and certain distinction, securing the idea of an hereditary nobility. The forms of national religion had been instituted by one of their early monarchs ; and by the laws rendering auguries, and auspices imperatively necessary as the initiatory rite of all assumption of civil or military functions, it had been so completely blended with the state, as not only to be a state religion, but absolutely to be its governing principle. The expulsion of the kings had no effect upon this arrangement ; and as none but men of patrician rank could hold the higher offices of the priesthood, the ruling principle was strictly speaking aristocratic.

In the wars against the Etrurians, instigated by the banished Tarquin, Rome was all but overthrown ; and in this desperate struggle for political existence it became necessary to keep

alive the popular spirit by additional popular concessions. Upon the return of security, the patricians devised means of recovering those oppressive privileges which they had relinquished in the time of danger, and circumstances seemed to favour their attempts. Rome had lost many of her previous acquisitions in her late war, and the plebeians especially had lost those lands which they had used to farm, and thereby to procure their subsistence. They were compelled to borrow the means of supporting life; and being unable to repay, were deprived of their personal liberty. In their extremity they broke out into violent dissensions; and at length withdrew to the Mons Sacer, refusing to return to Rome without some redress of those grievances under which they groaned. Certain redresses were granted; and they were allowed to select tribunes from their own body, to represent and protect them. The point of the popular wedge being thus introduced, it was utterly impossible for the whole power of the patricians to prevent its farther entrance; till it finally rent asunder the entire political mass; and became the means of destroying the fabric of public liberty.

As the debts of the plebeians had arisen chiefly from the loss of the lands which they formerly farmed, while they were compelled to pay their former proportion of taxes and other public burdens, the first care of the tribunes was to attempt to obtain some release from these burdens, or to procure the means of bearing them.

The latter object was sought by an agrarian law, requiring a new distribution of the public lands, and a prohibition against the possession of an undue quantity by any individual. In this there was undoubtedly both justice and reason, to a certain extent ; but it was also made use of by factious demagogues for their own selfish purposes ; and caused such violent dissensions between the two parties, as almost to bring the republic to a speedy ruin. The patricians and plebeians assumed the aspect of two hostile nations, within the walls of one city, the one of which must finally be destroyed by the other, unless some means could be found of removing their disagreements, and bringing about a blending of feelings and interests.

The first approach to this desirable end was made by the establishment of a code of laws, formed partly from traditions, usages, and previous enactments ; and partly from an importation of what was thought best in the laws of Greece. This produced legal equality, by defining the rights of each, and granting impartial and even-handed justice alike to all. The tyrannous retention of power by the decemvirs, seemed about to stifle freedom in the very moment of its birth ; but their forcible expulsion was more favourable to the cause of popular liberty than their voluntary resignation would probably have been. Incessant wars with the neighbouring states tended at the same time both to keep alive the warlike spirit of the na-

tion, and to render occasional concessions to popular clamour inevitable. Of these wars that against Veii was the most important, both on account of its duration, and of its consequences. A siege of ten years was required before Roman arms could prevail; and this protracted siege gave rise to winter campaigns and the employment of a regularly paid and standing army—two things before unknown in the world's warfare, and the last pregnant with consequences of incalculable importance, not only as regarded the art of war, but also with respect to general civilization.

The capture of Rome by the Gauls, which took place soon after the fall of Veii, was also an event by which the fortunes of the nation were greatly modified. The great exertions necessary to raise the city out of its ashes, together with the taxes consequent on the introduction of military pay, plunged the plebeians again into debt; and gave rise to fresh dissensions between them and the patricians. This struggle was the most desperate, and the most protracted of all; but the plebeians were now too much aware of their own power to be easily baffled, and being headed by tribunes of more than usual firmness and sagacity, they obtained their demand, and succeeded in giving to the constitution of the republic its final modification. They obtained a participation in the consulship; in the higher offices of the priesthood; access to all places of political

power; and the establishment of an agrarian law at least as favourable to the plebeians as to the patricians. Not only legal, but also political equality was now established between the two great classes of the state; and though the patricians remained distinct, as a body of hereditary nobility, chiefly through their senatorial character, and the paucity of intermarriages with the plebeians, even after they became legal, the chief originating power was now in the hands of the people, so that the principle of government might fairly be said to be the democratic. It was, however, held in check by so many antagonist powers, and kept in such a state of harmonious adjustment by the very intricacy of the multifarious relationships subsisting between the parties, and orders, and offices in the state, that it presented the prospect of peace and security at home, permitting the restless spirit of the people to seek for external employment.

The internal constitution thus formed, adjusted, and settled, was, like that of Britain, by no means the work of one great master-mind; but was the result of long contentions,—innumerable expedients, yielding in their turn as better were devised,—aggressions mutually made by the opposing parties in their hour of strength, and concessions in that of weakness,—and that steady equipoise obtained by the well-balanced action of opposing principles, knit together into the firmest and closest union by

repeated heavings, subsidings, and conjunctions.

Internal tranquillity having been thus established on a firm basis, and with every prospect of stability, while the aggressive spirit though regulated had suffered no diminution, the arms of Rome were turned against the most formidable rival whom she had yet encountered. A doubtful contest of about fifty years against the Samnites, then the Latians, and lastly against the Tarentines aided by Pyrrhus, conducted Rome, though not without sustaining repeated reverses, at length to the sovereignty of all Italy, leaving her flushed with victory and eager for fresh wars and additional conquests. The period of these Samnite and Latian wars was that in which the military strength of Rome was completely established, and her skill in tactics greatly advanced, both by necessity and practice, and by coming in contact with the Grecian discipline of Pyrrhus. Her newly-formed regular troops received every advantage from actual service, and from the lessons learnt from their skilful antagonist. The narrow peninsula of Italy was now a scene too limited for the display of Roman courage, and the gratification of Roman ambition; nor was there any longer a foe able to dare her to the encounter, from the Alps to Lower Italy. The vicinity of Sicily placed it almost naturally within the grasp of Rome; and on its plains Rome first met her mightiest rival, Carthage.

No sooner did these rival republics meet in hostile opposition, than they conceived the most deadly hatred against each other,—each seeming to imagine that nothing could secure her own independent existence, but the utter extermination of her antagonist. This spirit animated Rome through all her subsequent contests ; and never ceased to mutter with set teeth its fierce “*delenda est Carthago*,” till it beheld the last embers of the devoted city quenched with the blood of its latest children. The full gratification of this deadly hatred involved a very great political error ; and was destined to issue in events not less fatal to the haughty and cruel conqueror, than to her prostrate foe. Rome, like a stately oak, had thriven in the midst of tempests ; and while it boldly buffeted the blast, had continued to strike its roots more deeply into the soil, which both nourished and upheld it : but when no storm any longer shook, as if to fix its earth-fast grapples, or winnowed its massy boughs, it became infected at the core, and the symptoms of decay began to dodder its noble stem and to creep along its hoary branches, giving sad omen of approaching ruin. In plain terms, Rome needed a rival, if it were only to keep her in a state of wakeful activity, and to prevent the growth of that degrading and lethargic luxury, which springs from too great a persuasion of security.

The history of these rival republics furnishes one lesson of some importance to the student of

human nature. The hostile feelings of rival republics are more implacable than those of nations under any other form of government. The passions of any numerous body of men always rise much higher than those of any individual could have done when alone. Even men of virtue, candour, and generosity, will, under the excitement of a public meeting, readily sanction measures of the utmost disingenuity, selfishness, and oppression. Rarely indeed will a popular assembly be withheld from gratifying its feelings of revenge or spoliation by reasons of the most convincing nature ; and, if possible, still more rarely can such assembly be brought to comprehend what is the most likely to promote its true welfare ; and it might be safely said, that there is not one instance on record in which the popular voice has declared itself in favour of purchasing a remote and great advantage at the price of submitting to a present and inferior disadvantage. In fact, the government of the many is always more tyrannical, unjust, and cruel, than that of the few ; and when two nations, each directed by such a government, engage in war, it almost of necessity becomes a war of extermination. The cause of this is to be found in the corruption of human nature, and the consequent readiness with which men will indulge their evil propensities, whenever the fellowship of many seems to promise to each an apparent exemption from personal responsibility. The true secret of good government is, the individual responsibility of the ruler.

When men act in masses, their individuality is lost,—with it their self-restraint disappears,—and then malignant selfishness lifts an unblushing brow, and utters its bloody and imperious mandates. For this reason the popular will can never be the best ruling principle of national government, till the whole of the population become wise, virtuous, and generous, collectively as well as individually,—and that will be, when they have become, each and all, Christians, not in name only, but in reality, and from the heart, and never till then.

The danger in which the unrivalled military genius of Hannibal had placed Rome, tended to increase the rancour with which she regarded Carthage; even till it degenerated into the mean spirit of persecution directed against a single man. This was also an indication of the corruption which was now rapidly extending its ravages throughout the whole Roman character, destroying the simple virtues of earlier days, and preparing her own downfall. But her ancient spirit was still strong; and her Punic wars had brought her into contact with many nations, over whom her ambition conceived the idea of extending her sway. Spain became a province. Macedonia received her yoke, after having given one conqueror to the world. Greece, under the specious name of protection, saw herself placed under the same thralldom; and wherever the consuls and the armies of this terrible military republic appeared, they trampled alike on the

crowns and thrones of sovereigns, or the simpler insignia of popular rule, till there seemed no power on earth able to prevent them from seizing the sceptre of universal dominion.

During these foreign wars changes of a very important nature were creeping into the character of both people and government. So long as the Romans had to contend for existence, and were surrounded with difficulties, all their nobler qualities were kept in a state of constant action; and they acquired a spirit of stern determination superior to any thing ever before seen in the world. As prosperity shone upon them their character suffered a deterioration; and they began to acquire a degree of vain-glory, rapacity, and love of luxurious pleasures, to which they had previously been strangers, and which augured ill for the preservation of national virtue. The conquest of Greece, and the acquisition of Asiatic wealth by the bequest of Attalus, introduced new sources of corruption and vicious indulgence, and increased the public depravity at least as much as it promoted public refinement. It was more than a figurative form of expression,—it was the language of the philosophical politician, that the poet used when he said, “that vanquished Greece captured her conqueror.” Yet this corruption of public morals did not render Rome less formidable to her neighbours, but the reverse:—it stimulated ambition by the new modes of acquiring power which it pointed out, and it increased the ten-

dency to oppressive exactions from the conquered provinces, by means of which the oppressors might purchase immunity from their countrymen, by sharing the spoils.

Equal changes were taking place in the spirit, if not in the form, of the government. The long wars against the Carthaginians rendered it necessary that men of military and political talents should be possessed of something approaching to a permanent sway; and as certain families chanced to display these abilities in a very distinguished manner, they acquired considerable ascendancy in the state. The people in general, intoxicated with the glory of foreign conquests, paid less attention to the progress of this growing aristocratic principle, if even their own increasing degeneracy would have permitted them to offer it an effectual resistance. Besides, being flattered with the apparent possession of entire political power, they permitted without reluctance the senate to engross the whole labour of directing its energies. This also, while it tended to the same result internally, rendered the Roman senate one of the most skilful political bodies, that ever conducted the public affairs of any nation. Aware of the frenzied excesses of the populace, when roused to tumult, they encouraged that aggressive spirit so characteristic of a vain and ambitious people; and by the same means diverted the attention of the public mind from their own conduct, which they knew could not bear a narrow scrutiny. Thus

the restless and domineering spirit of the democracy rendered them eager for foreign conquests; while the senate fostered this inclination, in order both to share in the acquisitions, and to prosecute their own encroachments upon internal power, unwatched and undetected. With the most profound political sagacity they managed to keep the nation continually at war, with some one or other of the neighbouring nations, yet so as seldom to enter into hostilities with more than one at a time, lest their force should be weakened by being too much divided. Their alliances were generally made with small states, in order to have it in their power to find a pretext for assailing the more powerful at their own convenience. Thus while Rome was advancing with rapid strides to universal dominion, her own internal organization was undergoing a corresponding change, preparatory to such a revolution as should place the sceptre of sole sovereignty once more in a single hand—that there might be one ruling empire, and one imperial ruler.

When Rome directed her arms against Greece and the Asiatic nations, her conquests were greatly facilitated by the degeneracy of her antagonists, both people and governments. The successors of Alexander had sunk into the dead level of Asiatic sloth and effeminacy; and Greece had lost both her ancient liberty and that free spirit by which alone it could be maintained. The East was ready to receive a conqueror;

and as it had not quite lost the civilization superinduced upon it by the Macedonian conquest, it was more fitting that the new empire should be one of a civilized character, than one sprung from some horde of nomad barbarians. And as the infusion of Grecian taste and genius had proved ineffectual to rouse Asia from her mental and moral dormancy, republican Rome was commissioned to give her one more rough shock, before she should be pronounced incurable. The shock was given, but it could not awaken the dead. Empires might be overthrown, and others erected in their room ; but the Asiatic mind had sunk into hopeless depravity, and it longed for nothing but to be left in its listless stupor of indolent and voluptuous repose.

Rome herself began to draw near her crisis. The introduction of wealth furnished the means, and the imitation of wealthy nations led the way to indulgence in every kind of vice, public and private. The corruption of morality speedily plunged the poorer classes of citizens into debts and other difficulties, rendering them ripe for the machinations of designing demagogues. On the other hand, the protracted influence of leading families in the senate, and of the senate itself in the state, had given rise to an aristocracy of noble families,—or almost to an oligarchy. Violent dissensions speedily broke out between these two parties, more bitter than those between the patricians and the plebeians by which the youth of the state had been so strongly

agitated. The sedition of the Gracchi began the dreadful conflict. Marius,—like an impersonation of the spirit of democracy,—fierce, sanguinary, relentless,—brave to excess, but savagely ferocious,—full of wily stratagems in order to gain his object, then dashing from him every hard-won advantage, by his reckless brutality,—Marius next took the lead, and precipitated the fate of his country. Sylla appeared in a very different light, though scarcely, if at all, less pernicious. In him the aristocratic spirit had its representative ;—haughty, cautious, and determined, forming his schemes with deep forethought, prosecuting them with deliberate perseverance, and abandoning them with cold contempt when his object was accomplished ;—he held the dictatorial sway till he had satiated his revenge, causing the streets of Rome to flow with blood, then scornfully laid aside his power, and yielded himself to voluptuous indulgence. By these men it was made clearly evident, that Rome no longer possessed sufficient public or private virtue to maintain her republican institutions ; and the only question was, whether her future lord should be a Marius, or a Sylla,—whether he should spring from among the people, or the aristocratic nobility.

It were superfluous to trace, however briefly, the civil wars between Pompey and Cæsar, familiarly known as they are to every person of the least education ; especially as they nei-

ther sprung from, nor gave rise to, any principle different from those previously in existence, and which have been already mentioned, so far as seemed necessary for our purpose. Republican virtues had become extinct, and the form could no longer be retained. The incapacity of either senate or people any longer to govern themselves or the state, had been fully shown, and the necessity of imperial and undivided sway demonstrated, to prevent the prevalence of universal anarchy. Than Julius Cæsar the world did not at that time—perhaps never did—contain a man more capable of collecting and reconstructing the shattered fragments of society, and of holding with steady hand, and guiding with clear intelligence, the reins of universal and imperial government. Roman liberty, overthrown and sullied by others, perished beneath his parricidal steel; yet in her last convulsive struggles, smote her destroyer, and dragged him with her to the tomb.

After one more brief period of ineffectual resistance, the vacant throne was mounted by Augustus;—the civilized world submitted to his sway;—the dominion of the fourth mighty empire was completely established;—and the mind of man, having passed through every trial corresponding with its leading faculties, and found all incapable of raising it to its pristine purity and grandeur, and of imparting to it a self-sustaining permanence, seemed about to sink into a state of monotonous and hopeless stagnation, political,

mental, and moral. It is when human efforts are seen and acknowledged to be vain, that the arm of the Almighty is wont to be revealed. It is when proud man is humbled into a perception of his weakness, that wisdom and power from on high is communicated. To this condition the world had come; and this infinite Wisdom and Mercy saw to be "the fulness of time," in which to send forth the healing, restoring, and enlightening Word. But before attempting to sum up the argument, we must endeavour to point out in what respects and to what extent the Roman empire had contributed to the mental and moral discipline of mankind, especially as it appears that the stamp of maturity was then impressed on the human race and character.

In the science of government Rome may be said to have made a series of experiments, leaving the deductions to after ages rather than to have made any great progress beneficial to herself. At first she, like all rude nations, adopted monarchy; but the power of her kings never was despotic, being from the first controlled by the senatorial body. Being elective also, it was almost inevitable that popular privileges should be frequently promoted though at the expense of royal prerogatives. The suddenness and ease with which Tarquin was expelled, prove that the monarchic principle had taken no deep root in the heart of the nation. Upon this event the government passed through a very perilous experiment, in which it might have perished but for

the presence of external danger, which induced all parties to knit their interests together as quickly and closely as possible, that they might united brave the impending storm. The executive power was entrusted to the two consuls, who were annually elected by the people, and who received their instructions from the senate. This caused a certain counterpoise of powers by which the equilibrium of the state was preserved, and even a near resemblance to a mixed form of government was attained. Still, as the choice of the executive power was vested in the people, the tendency was to the democratic principle ; and even the deliberative body, the senate, would not have been able to keep a sufficient check upon the rash impulses of popular will, but for one or two expedients and peculiarities, not unworthy of specific mention.

Whatever credit be given to the account of the first sovereign of Rome being chosen by the guidance of augury, certain it is, that from the very earliest period the utmost deference was paid to whatever could be thought to indicate the will of the gods. No public office could be assumed, no public action commenced, without consulting the augurs and haruspices ; and the slightest informality was enough to suspend, or set aside the most important undertaking. This put all public measures under the entire control of those who filled the sacred offices and discharged their solemn functions ; and as the highest stations in the priesthood could be held only

by persons of patrician birth, that body were generally able to avail themselves of popular superstition, and thus to thwart or retard what they could not openly have resisted. At the same time, as the priests did not form a separate caste in the state, nor was any office hereditary, it was impossible that they should degenerate into a body having interests different from those of the nation in general,—an evil which had taken place with most baneful effect in Egypt and the Asiatic empires. State religion thus became a most efficient instrument of state policy ; but, unlike what has often happened elsewhere, was generally used for the purpose of promoting the public welfare. It might indeed be abused to purposes of selfishness and faction ; and must have excited any thing but reverential feelings in those who were in the secret. Cicero, himself an augur, expresses his surprise that two augurs could look each other in the face without laughing.

Another of the salutary checks upon the proverbial rashness of the popular will, was of a still more peculiar nature, and of a highly valuable character. At the very commencement of Roman existence it was found necessary to enact and promulgate a body of laws, favourable to the protection of person and property, in order to hold out inducements calculated to attract additional settlers, and thus to strengthen the infant colony. Every new conquest gave birth to new enactments, and re-adjustments of those already

in existence. Popular rights, magisterial duties, and patrician privileges, were thus accurately defined and understood by all, even while civilization of every other kind was almost utterly neglected. The science of jurisprudence kept pace with that of war ; and while every Roman soldier was well skilled in military tactics, every Roman citizen was equally well acquainted with legal principles. Deviation to any extent from the proper course was thus almost impossible, from the certainty of instantaneous detection, and the admitted authority of general principles, to which appeal could immediately be made. The encroachments of the ruling power, or the deliberative body, could be met by the same test and check ; and the intemperate fervour of popular will was also within its controlling influence. Thus, though after the expulsion of the kings there remained, strictly speaking, but two powers in the government, without a third to regulate their proportions and balance both, the equilibrium was nevertheless maintained, and chiefly by the universally known and admitted influence of public law. The third,—the balancing power, in Rome, was an ideal impersonation of law ;—to it was the ultimate appeal of all parties and interests ;—by it the spirit of the stern republic was guided and controlled throughout the greater part of its conquering career ;—and even after imperial Rome, false to her own principles, and plunged in the depths of mental, moral, and national depravity, fell before the rude

assaults of hardy and more simply virtuous barbarians, her code of laws survived, and on the revival of civilization again emerged from their hiding place at Amalfi, once more to be the ruling spirit of European jurisprudence.

Even these checks and conservative principles were unable to give permanence to the form of government at Rome. So long as the republic remained poor, and beset by dangerous and powerful enemies, her watchful attitude was maintained, and her well-trained and public-spirited sons were invincible, because disregardful of self, they lived only for their country. As her power extended, and dangers became less and more remote, luxury and vice entered with the feeling of security, and began to produce their usual effects in corrupting both private and public virtue. Private immorality is perfectly incompatible with true patriotism. When the influx of wealth, therefore, began to corrupt the channels of morality, means were soon found to bias the course of justice, and suspend the authority of law. When all offices in the state were thrown equally open to both parties, one set of guiding and controlling expedients were removed: and as it is the invariable tendency of corruption to fester into masses, wealth and power, to an enormous extent, became the possession of individuals; who were thus enabled to set the laws at defiance, and to throw the same licentious protection over their profligate followers. Nothing better

could then happen, than that these conflicting parties should be smitten down by some strong hand ; and that since Rome no longer possessed republican virtue enough to be capable of a republican government, while her aristocratic body was at least as corrupt as her democratic, both should be coerced, and a monarchical or imperial government erected in their stead. This was done by Cæsar, and his successor Augustus ; and thus her existence as a ruling power was prolonged for some centuries after she had lost every quality by which it had been gained.

Notice has already been taken of the peculiarly aggressive character of republican Rome, in consequence of that line of policy which rendered conquest a means of promoting not only the public interest, but also that of every private individual ; while the recently plundered, by swelling the ranks of their plunderers, became participators in the next spoils, and thus obtained a sort of guilty compensation. The almost uninterrupted course of success she enjoyed, has also been accounted for by ascribing it to the deep sagacity and forethought with which the senate guided the energies, which they were unable to repress ; and which, without some such mode of obtaining employment and gratification, would have destroyed those who attempted to control them, and then rushed to mutual destruction. While the scene of action was confined within Italy, it was not strange

that Rome should continue to assail her neighbours, as her own independence could scarcely be secured while other states, almost equally powerful, retained their independence around her, and might at any time form a confederacy for her overthrow. But that when undisputed mistress of Italy she should continue her aggressive career, and even aspire to the sovereignty of the world, was what could not have been expected, and seems to require a different explanation.

An early persuasion seems to have been entertained by the Romans, that their proud city should become the metropolis of the world, the queen of the whole earth. To gain for her this universal dominion became the ruling passion of every Roman, and his own life was as nothing in his own estimation, if its loss could tend to promote that glorious object. How this wildly ambitious dream took possession at first of the nation's heart, it seems impossible with certainty to say; but it exercised a very powerful influence upon its character and fortunes. To the principle of self-preservation may be ascribed no small portion of her early exploits; but her subsequent gigantic efforts were made under the inspiration of that stupendous idea, and partook of its sublime audacity. Her simple virtues were sufficient to support her against her early antagonists; but even after luxury and effeminacy had obliterated every trace of ancient virtue, her arms were pene-

trating the deserts of Africa, traversing the wide plains of Asia, and plunging into the depths of German forests, invincible in the might and majesty of Rome's imperial destinies. It is very probable, that this idea was devised by the senate, and infused into the public mind by the augurs, and other expounders of sacred oracles. Probably the Sibylline books were in some measure the instruments of its propagation; and they may even have contained some allusion to such an event, in their mystical predictions, which seem to have been partly derived from the Hebrew prophets, though misunderstood and misapplied. This, at least, is certain; that after the subjugation of Italy, and the consequent relaxation of republican virtue, the continuation of the same stern indomitable will,—the same persevering determination to triumph,—the same confidence in the fates and future fortunes of Rome,—was the result almost entirely of that indestructible belief, that the destinies of Rome would be fulfilled in her acquisition of universal empire. This firm belief was, as frequently happens in similar predictions, one of the most influential means in producing its own fulfilment; but one thing was not foreseen,—that tyranny and slavery are in one sense convertible terms; and that universal dominion could not be obtained without the loss of her own liberty.

The religion of Rome differed little from that of Greece, the same deities being worshipped in both countries, and with rites almost indetical.

The effect produced upon the national character, however, was considerably different in the two countries,—unless indeed it was merely the reaction of a modification previously springing from that national character itself. In Greece the whole spirit of the national religion was luxuriant and imaginative, suited to the character of the people, and deepening its peculiarities. The Roman character was graver, sterner, and less imaginative; and their worship displayed a corresponding aspect, and tended to give additional stateliness and greater permanence to that severe dignity, by which the ancient Roman was distinguished. Bred in the midst of foes and difficulties against which his whole life was one entire warfare, the Roman felt the necessity of superior aid; and in the depth of idolatry retained feelings closely allied to true piety. For ages the sanctity of an oath was rarely violated; and to what was deemed the will of the gods every interest, public or private, was readily sacrificed. Veneration for all the rites of religion was among them a far deeper feeling than it ever was among the lively and fickle Greeks; and the violation of sacred usages did not become prevalent till almost every other form of moral propriety, whether conventional or real, had disappeared. Nor did it fall before the subtle spirit of philosophy, as in Greece; for wealth and luxury had made considerable inroads upon both religion and morality, before the Roman mind had either leisure or inclination

to cultivate philosophy, Adversity, or at least difficulty elicited her noblest feelings from the heart of Rome, or superinduced them upon her character. So long as the struggle continued she was virtuous, and up to the amount of her knowledge pious,—her morality pure, and her religious sentiments lofty. When prosperity had shone upon her path too long, she became selfish, dissolute, and impious; for it is in nations as in individuals, too continuous a course of prosperity is not propitious to morality. With her growing irreligion and immorality the omens of her coming fall multiplied; and its speedy approach was prevented only by the stern determination to fulfil her destinies by the achievement of universal dominion.

If in religion Rome was but the copyist of Greece, so far as originality is concerned, she was still more so in philosophy, and indeed in every department of mental culture. The din of arms and the splendour of triumphs agree but ill with the calm and tranquil pursuits of the meditative mind. The long and incessant wars in which Rome was engaged for many centuries prevented the possibility of her attention being turned to the cultivation of any thing, but what could promote her success either in council or on the battle-field. Intellect strongly directed to purposes of immediate utility, was her characteristic; and at no time did she give indications of possessing any high degree of imaginative genius. When the course of victory

brought her armies to Greece, she became acquainted with the masterpieces of Grecian taste in the arts, skill in the sciences, and speculative research in philosophy. The public safety being at that time secure, the public mind was at ease and enjoyed abundant leisure for any pursuit either useful or amusing. Yet, the study of philosophy made very slow progress in Rome ; and all the additions ever made by her to what Greece had previously done, were of comparatively little value. The Stoic philosophy was most congenial to the Roman mind ; and indeed its best spirit had been displayed in living embodiment by the republican patriots, long before they had even heard of its name. Its principles were those in which the stern nurture of early difficulties had reared the infant republic ; and when they received them afresh from Greece, it seemed but like the practical wisdom of their ancestors, set forth in collected detail, instead of the imported precepts of a foreign speculative philosophy. But they were already too far gone in luxurious corruption to receive any real advantage from listening to the sage and severe maxims of Zeno ; and though such men as Cato, and Brutus, might imbibe them with kindred and even rival sympathy, the lax principles and still laxer morality of the Epicureans, spoke a language more pleasing to the community at large.

In Rome, as formerly in Greece, the introduction of philosophy tended directly to the over-

throw of the popular religious belief. The leading tenet of Epicureanism,—that the Gods take no interest in the affairs of men,—struck immediately at every form of worship ; and so far as its influence extended must have caused the desertion of the temples, and the extinction of the sacrificial fires on every altar. The overthrow of superstition and idolatry would indeed be a matter of little regret, had it replaced the loss of the popular creed with a purer and truer belief, or established some more efficient principle of morality. It did neither ; and it left the depraved mind, freed from every restraint, at full liberty to indulge in its worst and basest passions, to the utmost bent of its inclination. Even Roman pride and imperial ambition, which had so long supplied the loss of simpler and purer virtues, and furnished, if not a natural life, a demoniacal possession to the body politic, vanished away before the exorcising sneer of the philosophical sceptic ; and the last vital principle having perished, nothing could ensue but political, mental, and moral death.

Not only in philosophy, but also in almost every department of mind did Rome content herself with imitating Greece. Being decidedly inferior in imaginative powers, she could not possibly reach any approach to equal poetic excellence. To critics, however, we leave the pleasing task of wandering over the fields of Greek and Roman song, to cull and to compare the flowers that attract their delighted eyes. In history

Rome must be allowed to have attained unrivalled excellence ; and Tacitus occupies an eminence unshared by any other historian, ancient or modern. This high praise is due to that spirit of profound practical philosophy with which he investigates the deeds, and detects the secret intentions of mankind ; and that spirit appears to be an impersonation of the genius of statesmanship which presided in the noble senates of republican Rome in her most virtuous days.

The science of Rome was equally imitative, and equally unsuccessful, in every branch but one. In military science Rome outstripped Greece, as far as she had done Persia. The Macedonian phalanx bore down the light troops of Persia with ease ; but was itself rent asunder by the Roman legion, and scattered like a mighty oak by the explosive force of the thunderbolt. It has been already noticed that the siege of Veii introduced one innovation in military science, till then unknown,—the regular payment of troops, which thus became a standing army, trained exclusively to war, as to a craft by which to earn their subsistence. This improvement placed a weapon in the hands of the ambitious republic of such keen edge and matchless temper, as to be altogether irresistible ; and to it may be fairly ascribed her subsequent uninterrupted course of victory and conquest. But the employment of standing armies is not more favourable to victory than to general civilization. The wars of undisciplined barbarians are always

bloody and destructive. As mind assumes the ascendancy, and the contest becomes a trial of skill, it declines in malignity and fierceness. By the use of standing armies it acquires a scientific character, is followed as a profession, studied as a science, and waged in a spirit of regulated rivalry, which allows, and even inculcates, the exercise of many generous sentiments between the belligerent parties. A battle, with all its rapid movements and skilful combinations, is a trial, less of strength or courage, than of genius; and even the whole course of a campaign can be made the subject of previous calculations, and reduced almost to the regulated order of a demonstrated theorem in mathematics. This is one of the triumphs of advanced civilization, and by a reciprocal action tends greatly to promote its advancement. It prevents the needless waste of human life, in very many instances, by displaying the impracticability of the object, and thereby deterring from the fruitless attempt; at the same time even when undertaken, it leaves by far the majority of the hostile nations to pursue their avocations, as if in a state of profound peace. And perhaps its greatest merit is one of a perfectly incidental nature. The maintenance of standing armies in the time of peace tends most powerfully to prevent the outbreaking of war;—less by the vigilant and guarded attitude which it enables nations to assume, than by the enormous expense which it causes, thus absolutely draining them of their resources for en-

tering upon actual warfare by the very vastness and value of their quiescent military preparations. This last remark might be amply illustrated by reference to modern times and recent events ; and it might be followed up, as one of cheering promise in its probable influence upon the future history of the world, co-operating with other causes to introduce a state of things when if nations did learn, they at least should practise the art of war no more,—preparatory to that still happier period when the Prince of Peace shall reign, and his kingdom shall be universal.

The effects of the stern spirit of Rome in carrying forward the process of the world's culture are sufficiently apparent. In Greece the predominance of imagination, while it conferred an ethereal elevation upon her whole character and all her productions, augured ill for their permanence. There was also too much of the soft Asiatic voluptuousness to promise much endurance. She had indeed been trained to the utmost activity of intellect and action ; but her triumphs had been too easy and rapid to have inured her to patient, unchanging endeavour. The efforts of Greece showed what could be achieved by mental supremacy under the inspiration of liberty ; and her early fall proved the inefficiency of the highest endowments to secure their own trophies without the steady guidance of self-governing determination. As if to supply what had been wanting in Greece the character of

Rome was formed amid the pressure of circumstances the best adapted to compress it into the requisite firmness, and give it the needed bias. It was assailed from its earliest appearance by dangers of every kind, not insurmountable, but sufficient to task its energies to their highest exercise. No relaxation was possible, because one difficulty was only the precursor of another and more formidable ; and Roman hardihood and resolution grew with every trial, her confidence in her own resources, and her trust in her own fortunes, rising with every successive triumph. Incessantly assailed, her existence was one incessant struggle ; and invariably successful she was trained never to succumb, and to consider nothing beyond her achievement. Unconquerable resolution, inflexible perseverance, stern immitigable will, became the elements of the Roman character ; and when these dread qualities trained to the most perfect degree of skilful strength had placed the sceptre of universal dominion in the grasp of Rome, it might have seemed that the world had found at last a seat of empire which should be perpetual.

The Assyrio-Babylonian and Persian empires were characterized by the development of man's physical nature, and those of his mental faculties which are most allied to the objects and enjoyments of sense ; their fall before the intellectual empire of Greece was, therefore, inevitable, for mind must always triumph over

matter. Greece wanted the severe spirit of ripe manhood. Hers seemed the youth of intelligence, so full of bright dreams, ardent aspirations, and all the splendid creations of an imaginative mind, not yet tamed to the sober realities of actual existence, and changeful even by the very excess of her yet unexplored capacities. The sway of such a power could not be permanent when assailed by one of equal intelligence and superior determination. The first contest between Greeks and Romans was ominous of the result. Pyrrhus, by the aid of superior strategy, defeated the Romans; but instructed by their defeat they renewed the contest, and gained the victory. The same was the course of the whole career of Rome. She thought it no disgrace to be taught by her enemy; and by acquiring successively that in which her antagonist excelled, and guiding the combined amount by her own stern, unbending spirit, she advanced steadily, and as by a fatal necessity, to the undisputed sovereignty over all. The full manhood of human nature seemed to have obtained complete development in the Roman character; and even presented, as in full manhood, symptoms of incipient, though still distant decay. There remained no leading elements of the human mind still in a state of undiscovered dormancy. Effeminacy had obtained most ample indulgence in Asia. Genius, in Greece, had soared its loftiest flights, and won its proudest trophies. Strong and dis-

ciplined sagacity had in Rome established its firm abode, and asserted its grave authority. The mental and moral culture of mankind was, therefore, completed ; because the human mind had reached maturity,—all its powers had been developed under the most favourable circumstances, by the most skilfully adapted processes, and on a scale of the most magnificent dimensions,—and what had been the result ? The most abundant proof,—the clearest demonstration,—that no kind or degree of mental, moral, or political culture, could avail to rescue man from his perishing condition, avert the ruin impending over his fairest prospects, or close the yawning gulf of destruction in which all his paths of amplest promise terminated.

Of this melancholy truth the Roman empire furnished the last and the most convincing proof. Its opportunities were the best, its means the greatest, and its degeneracy the most complete. The treasures of all past experience were at its command ;—its own culture had been more severe and protracted, and therefore, and to that extent, better than any previous nation had enjoyed ;—its grave, proud, and stern character, seemed to give it exemption from the effeminacy, the vanity, and the levity which had been fatal to its imperial predecessors ;—with all these advantages the experiment was made, and they but ensured for it the most signal, inexcusable, and hopeless failure. Sad though the spectacle

of the human race, in its Asiatic slavery, and Grecian corrupt and crafty because degraded intellect, still they may be contemplated without that sensation of intense and unspeakable loathing which overpowers the mind, when we peruse the annals of Roman degeneracy under the sway of such monsters as Nero and Domitian. The very qualities which had so essentially contributed to the growth of Roman power, gave increased virulence to its diseased and festering corruption. The strong and resolute will, that had hewed its way to conquest, rushed with equal determination to the commission of crime; the stern spirit that bore the Roman on through torrents of blood, and over heaps of slaughtered foes, impelled him to plunge into the deepest enormities, and to glut his savage heart with the most ferocious horrors. Pride, the vice of the high-minded republican, infused into the bosom of the degenerate imperialist, a more envenomed malignity, a blacker corruption, than the voluptuous Asiatic, or the imaginative Grecian could have imbibed. Military skill, which had rendered them the lords of the world, ended in making them the slaves of a military despotism; and from the slavery in which they held other nations was at length, by fitting retribution, engendered a tyranny for themselves.

The rise of Roman power, in spite of all opposing obstacles, had taught the world what mighty deeds could be done by the force of indomitable resolution; and this was an important

lesson. Her degeneracy and fall proved, that not even that, the most enduring quality of the human mind, contained within itself a principle of undying vitality, but the reverse ;—that it contained, indeed, like every thing else pertaining to man, the cause of its own destruction ; and that notwithstanding its semblance of present vigour, and promise of future permanence, it could but communicate a convulsive stimulus, leading to a certain death.

A mind capable of tracing the path along which the human race had travelled, and of perceiving the kinds of culture which had been successively employed, fitted to the gradual and natural development of the world's intelligence,—seeing the failure of every process, and being aware that the capacities of man had now been fully tried, and thus all natural means exhausted, might have been struck with the melancholy conviction, that there was no recovery for the lost progeny of Adam. Other empires might rise in Asia ; but they would merely retrace the steps already trod by that of Persia, and from a conquering horde of mountaineers, or nomad wanderers, degenerate into loose voluptuaries, and terminate in a population of indolent despots, and effeminate slaves. Such has been repeatedly the course of Asiatic conquests ; and such they would continue to be, so far as depended upon their own character and tendencies.

Another Grecian empire might possibly arise ;

and its subtle mind might acquire for it extensive influence over mankind ; but the restless and selfish vanity of its component parts would prevent their complete union into one mutually supporting whole, and it would either perish by the fierce contentions of mutual rivalry, or provoke the hostility, and fall before the might, of some more determined, though less intellectual foe. Such, or nearly such, was the career and the fate of the second or lower Greek empire, in which all the elements of discord common to earlier times tore it with perpetual jealousy within ; while its perfidy, the result of perverted intellect, drew upon it from without the chastisement of the indignant crusaders ; and finally it was overthrown by the rude Turks, who in their fanaticism, believed themselves destined, as the ancient Romans had done, to acquire the empire of the world.

Perhaps, even the course by which Rome had been trained to victory, might again be traversed by some more western kingdom. Surrounded with nations scarcely less hardy and virtuous than itself, it might extend its dominions very slowly, and only in consequence of desperate struggles and hard-won victories, by which its spirit would be roused to the utmost pitch of resolute daring, and its political frame knit together into the most elastic agility and compact firmness. But uninterrupted prosperity would corrupt its spirit, and the very extent of its conquests would relax its physical and moral

tension ; luxury would poison its vital principle, and becoming dead and putrid at the core, it would fall an easy prey to the rough encounter of some poorer and more vigorous assailant. If no such European empire has since then arisen, and passed through a corresponding process, that is to be accounted for by a reason very soon to be stated. Yet that the hypothesis involves nothing glaringly extravagant is manifest from the fact, that the French revolution, its republican wars, the imperial sway of Napoleon, and the complete overthrow of that aggressive spirit and dynasty, seems like an abridgement of Roman history, with the change of names, compression of events, and suppression of time as an element, necessary to bring it within the requisite limits. And it is not unworthy of remark, that this is the only parallel instance which could have happened since the fall of the Roman empire, because France is the only nation since that period which has declared itself unchristian, and by depriving itself of the vitality of christian principles, was left free to follow the self-destructive tendencies of fallen human nature, and incur its certain ruin.

But that melancholy mood of musing upon the dark aspect of human destinies would have been interrupted by signs and omens of some mighty approaching event[r]. While yet the heart of Rome retained enough of life to send its warmth and energy throughout the mighty frame, and the sceptre was still held with firm

gripe in her conquering hand, a voice was heard as one of crying in the wilderness, proclaiming the advent of another Potentate, travelling in the greatness of his strength. To the speedy coming of this unknown Mighty One innumerable traditions and predictions from all quarters bore witness. The prostrate East began to raise her vanquished head, with reviving hope, because in the east this universal ruler was to arise. The victorious West bent her anxious looks with troubled expectation towards the same quarter, and heard with alarm the prophetic announcement, which seemed to portend a transfer of dominion. To the land of Judea the general attention was turned ; for from the summits of her sacred mountains seemed to proceed the boding voice that awed the world. Meanwhile the fierce energies of human passions were suspended,—the wild misrule of anarchy held in governed stillness,—the din and discord of hostile arms lulled into silent repose.—and the whole powers of nature checked into an attitude of quiet yet wakeful expectancy, till the crisis of the world should arrive, and the final determination of God respecting the destinies of man, for evil or for good, for ruin or recovery, be revealed. “The Fulness of Time” was come : the doom was spoken—not amid the throes of an earthquake, nor in the pealing tones of thunder ; but in the silent tranquillity of night, in the hearing of peaceful shepherds, in the harmonious accents of celestial song, and

the words of the gracious declaration were, "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN."

It is necessary once more to turn our attention to the state of affairs in Judea, preceding and preparing the way for that great event. The Jews had experienced upon the whole favourable treatment from the successors of Alexander, though repeatedly brought into dangerous contact with the contending monarchies of Syria and Egypt. From Antiochus Epiphanes they suffered the most outrageous and cruel oppression, which served only to rouse them to more determined hostility. The Egyptian kings in general showed them great kindness; and this was productive of important consequences. The Jews had repeatedly manifested an inclination for the friendship of Egypt, notwithstanding that it had been the "house of bondage" to their ancestors. When Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, and established a governor, the Jews killed him, and withdrew in great numbers to Egypt. Their descendants remained there during the period of the Persian empire; and were on the spot to form the nucleus of that settlement which Alexander encouraged for the purpose of obtaining inhabitants on whom he could depend for his new city, Alexandria. A similar line of policy was followed by Ptolemey, and the kings of his race; and the colony of Jews in Alexandria became both numerous and flourishing. Though they continued to retain their religion, and were

protected in its exercise by the Ptolemeys, they were gradually losing their language, so that their sacred writings were in danger of becoming a foreign tongue, unintelligible except to the learned. To obviate this difficulty a translation was made of the entire Hebrew Bible into Greek. This translation, commonly known by the name of the Septuagint, from the story of its having been the work of seventy translators, rendered the sacred writings of the Jews accessible, not only to their Alexandrian and Hellenistic brethren, but also to the whole civilized world, the conquests of Alexander having had the effect of making Greek a universal language. This was one striking preparation for the approaching promulgation of a universal religion, connected with, and springing out of these sacred writings previously diffused every where as vouchers, and without the possibility of the suspicion of any fraudulent collusion between its translators and the propagators of Christianity.

Beside this prospective preparation so providentially made, the translation of the Bible had another kindred and equally unintended effect. The previous universal empires had been of a rude and unintellectual character; and in order to give them an opportunity of becoming acquainted with true religion, of which the knowledge was possessed by the Jews alone, that people was overpowered and carried into the very centre of those empires. They had been restored to their native country by the Persian

kings, and were thus once more located near the seat of imperial power, which Grecian ascendancy had transferred to the shores of the Mediterranean. Intellect also was the characteristic of the Grecian empire, consequently the knowledge of the Jewish belief could be communicated with the utmost facility to such an empire by means of writings, without disturbing the abodes of the subject people. The proud Greek, however, despised every barbarian tongue too much to have interested himself greatly in the sacred records of so small and unimportant a nation as that of Judea. But the purposes of Heaven cannot be frustrated ; and the policy of Alexander and the Ptolemeys was over-ruled to the accomplishment of an end which they had not in view. The Jews of Alexandria translated their sacred writings into the language of Greece ; and immediately the oracles of truth became a portion of Grecian literature, and communicated a scarcely perceived, yet a deep influence to the inquiring minds of Greek philosophers, and through them to the civilized world. This was of more importance to the best interests of mankind than all the other consequences of Macedonian supremacy ; but it *was* one of those consequences ; and like all other events ordered by Providence, sprung from the past, and sowed the seeds of the future. Valuable in itself, its chief value consisted in its results. It joined that strong under-current of the tide of time, which was now setting irresistibly towards that

central point of attraction, the land of Palestine.

The condition of Judea itself bore the aspect of impending change. The military spirit roused by the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the gallant exploits of the Maccabees, had the effect of altering the character of its government, from its religious nature, under the sway of the High Priest, to that of a more secular form under military chiefs, preparatory to the acquisition of regal authority by Herod. The extraordinary diplomatic genius of this ambitious prince enabled him to establish himself firmly on the throne of Judah, and to surmount every obstacle and evade every danger that assailed him. His mixed blood, half Jewish, half Idumean, threatened the departure of the sceptre from Judah, especially when his barbarous suspicions caused the death of his own two sons by Mariamne, in whom the Asmonean race might have seemed revived. This was another of those converging lines, guided by no human hand, tending directly to the same point, and indicative of the passing of the sceptre from Judah and the near approach of Him, "to whom was to be the gathering of the people."

But not only the ambition and cruelty of Herod, the common course of Roman policy led to the very same result, with inevitable certainty. They had succeeded in overthrowing every powerful monarchy in Europe, Africa, and Asia, about the time when Herod was winning his way to sovereignty ; and though they had permitted

the smaller kingdoms to retain a seeming independence while engaged in more dangerous contests, they would soon have taught such kingdoms, that while Rome termed them 'friends and allies,' she considered them as subjects and tributaries. Judea must have sunk into a Roman province even sooner than it did, but for the civil wars of the two triumvirates ; and thus Herod was permitted to wear his crown till a short time after the coming of Him, who was in truth, what His murderers styled him in derision, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

Even the mental condition of the Hebrew nation gave no equivocal indications of the coming crisis. The intercourse which they had been obliged to maintain with the neighbouring countries, after the Macedonian conquest, had been productive of reciprocal effects upon both Greeks and Jews. To the former it imparted some acquaintance with the great truths of the only revealed word of God, especially the predictions of the prophets, which excited at once their curiosity and their interest. To the latter it communicated a portion of that philosophizing spirit by which the Grecian intellect was so peculiarly distinguished. The consequence was soon beheld, similar in kind, though less in degree, than that which Greece displayed. The people became divided into sects, regarding each other with the bitterest animosity,—the more so that their dissensions were of little moment, and could be brought to no satisfactory conclusion.

Of these sects the most prominent were the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. The Pharisees were strict adherents to the letter of the Mosaic law, which they had even rendered more burdensome than it originally was, by means of a multitude of traditions, to which equal reverence was given. They believed also in the immortality of the soul, and the existence of angels; but had disfigured the simplicity of the ancient national creed by the admission of several superstitious ideas peculiar to the Magians, and other oriental philosophers. The Sadducees, on the other hand, partook more of the Grecian spirit. They disregarded tradition, undervalued the prophets, denied the existence of spirits, and of the soul in a separate state, and approached as near the character of Pyrrhonists as it was possible, without altogether relinquishing Judaism. Between these two parties the most violent hostility subsisted, both religious and political, threatening to rend the state asunder with civil dissension. To reconcile them was impossible; and the ascendancy of either would have been alike fatal to the integrity of that faith, for the preservation of which alone the nation was called into existence. The sceptical spirit of the Sadducees tended directly to the denial of the sacred and authoritative character of their religious writings; and that exploded, all would have disappeared. The pride of the Pharisees, and their determined adherence to their own absurd and in some respects even impious glosses

and traditions, would have been equally destructive to the purity, and humanly speaking, to the very existence of divine truth, the simplicity of which must have been overwhelmed and lost beneath the huge mass of their corrupt and fantastic rabbinical fables. This jarring aspect of the Jewish national character was a very significant indication, that they had now nearly completed the purpose for which they had been constituted and preserved as a peculiar people ; and were about to be rent asunder, and scattered over the face of the earth, involuntary witnesses to the truth of that new dispensation which had its birth amid the expiring throes of their own.

In Greece and Rome the superstition of the community and the scepticism of the philosophers, concurred to destroy the forms and creeds of national religion, corrupting at the same time the state of public morals and thus ensuring their entire ruin, mental, moral, and political. The same process was now going on in Judea, and with consequences similar to a certain extent ;—yet with one very peculiar difference. The religion of Greece and Rome was false, and therefore perished in its hour of doom, together with the nations who embraced it, and whom it had tended to destroy. The religion of Judea was true, and therefore could not perish, notwithstanding the corruption and the dissensions of those who no longer held it in truth and sincerity. Nay more ; it preserved them in a state of supernatural vitality, in spite

of calamities, oppression, and dispersion, such as would have exterminated any other nation many times over ; and thus gave them a more than charmed existence, which even their own suicidal hands could not destroy. It was their fate to learn by terrible experience, and to display to the world, that true religion confers immortality upon a people ; but that to hold its principles accompanied with error, and in guilty perversity, will entail the fearful heritage of immortal wretchedness.

As the nations of the earth were held in awe by the expectation of some mighty conqueror's appearance, the hopes of the Jews were about the same time awakened by similar anticipations [s]. From their own Talmuds we learn that the coming of the Messiah was very generally looked for by the Jews of that period ; and very many incidental expressions throughout the Evangelists prove the prevalence of that expectation among all classes, though they had formed an erroneous notion respecting the character of the Messiah, "trusting that He would restore the kingdom to Israel." Nor were such expectations confined to politicians or fanatics, in their ambition or their mysticism ; they were entertained equally by the devout Simeon, and the prophetess Anna, and others who like them were "looking for redemption in Jerusalem." Thus the Gentile world and the Hebrew nation were for once possessed by the same spirit, and had their minds filled by the same idea ;—that

One about to be born in Judea should become the Ruler of the world,—and of His kingdom there should be no end. One universal feeling of expectation held the heart of the human race in a sort of hushed anxiety, waiting for the manifestation of the Prince and Redeemer; but biassed alike by ignorance and prejudice, their views were both misdirected, and neither Gentiles nor Jews could recognize the dreaded Sovereign, or the longed-for Saviour, in the CHILD OF BETHLEHEM.

“The light shone in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” This universal blindness, in the midst of universal expectation, can be explained only by the aid of one important principle, with the statement of which we shall close the process of demonstration, in order to enter upon that of summing up, to the brink of which by the course of our investigations we have now arrived. While we have attempted to show, that the course along which the world was led was both exactly suited to its nature, and exquisitely adapted to the gradual development of its powers,—and that it almost necessarily involved consequences such as those described; it by no means follows, that mankind were fully aware of the path along which they were travelling, understood its nature, and foresaw its consequences. Indeed the very reverse was the truth. But while the apparently natural course of events bore towards the crisis, without the intention, or even the consciousness

of the agents, the voice of prophecy from time to time foretold the approaching catastrophe, and kept alive its expectation. And this agreement between events and predictions,—this unanimity in the expectations of Gentiles and of Jews,—pointed out and proved the harmony subsisting between the foreknowledge and the ruling Providence of God. It proved the exact identity between what is called the natural course of events, and the wise pre-arrangements of Providence ; and the inability of man to discover, comprehend, or control either. If it had even been possible for some mind of profound political and moral sagacity to have foreseen the ruin of all existent institutions and creeds, because of the prevalence of that destroying principle sin, there is no reason to imagine that such a mind could have conceived the idea of the glorious recovery of man by the infusion of a new principle of life and holiness. Hence it was that all misunderstood the language of prophecy, and entertained mistaken notions respecting the character and condition of “ Him that was to come ;” so that when He came into that world which was made by Him, it “ knew Him not,” and his own people “ received Him not.”

CONCLUSION.

HITHERTO we have been engaged in tracing individually the characters of the several stages through which the mind of man passed in its progress to maturity ; and of the various ruling powers by which these stages were modified or represented. But having thus viewed the subject in its parts, it is necessary to recombine them, that it may be contemplated as a whole. In order therefore to obtain an unbroken view, and to receive an undivided impression of the entire process, it seems expedient briefly to retrace the leading characteristics of each portion, in continuous connection, as they proceed on their course, evolving, widening, and advancing, in aspect, dimensions, and ripeness, towards that “fulness of time,” in which they met at once their accomplishment and their termination.

The leading purpose of the disquisition in which we have been engaged was this :—To show that the precise epoch of our Saviour’s coming, termed by the Apostle the “fulness of time,” was not the result of any arbitrary determination of Sovereign Will ; but took place according to the arrangement of infinite Wisdom and Mercy, at the very point of time the best

calculated for accomplishing the great purpose for which it was ordained ; and that no period either before or since could have answered equally well. To the oft-repeated question, how it was the most suitable period, slight and superficial answers have been frequently given, evading, rather than solving, the difficulty. One class of answers represent it as the most suitable epoch, because it was the point towards which all the prophecies respecting that event converged, and in which they were fulfilled. This is obviously a mere *principii petitio*, or assumption of the point to be proved ; and its weakness and unsatisfactory nature is immediately seen, by asking the previous question,—but why did the prophecies select *that* time, rather than any other ? and this, essentially the same question, is left wholly unanswered.

Another class of answers state the world to have been at that time in a prepared condition, in consequence of the diffusion of the Grecian language, and the universal sway of Rome, which furnished a medium and a means of access to all nations, and thus was eminently favourable to the propagation of Christianity. This view is correct, so far as it goes ; but is too partial and superficial to be regarded as very satisfactory. It shows indeed that there *was* a suitability in that epoch ; but it does not prove it the *most* suitable. Any prevalent language, and universal empire, might, so far as this answer shows, have suited equally well ; and such

universality of language and empire had co-existed before, and might, for what we know, co-exist again, so that the real difficulty remains still unsolved by this class of replies.

The solution which we would offer is this : That the aggregate being, man, was brought, under the guidance of Providence, through a course of physical, political, mental, and moral culture, giving the fullest development to all the faculties of his nature, under the most favourable circumstances, exploring all his resources, and tasking all his energies to the utmost, till they should gradually have attained their complete maturity, and revealed their true character and capacities for evil or for good ; and that then, and not till then, was “ the fulness of time,” while any subsequent period would have been more,—that is,—would have been beyond the zenith of maturity, and within the prone and waning regions of decay. It must, we think, be admitted, that this proposition is marked with the impress of strong probability, if not of self-evident truth. But to wear the aspect of truth is not enough, in a subject against which men are disposed to reason when they can, to cavil when they cannot reason, and to doubt or disbelieve in wilful obstinacy, when every other resource fails them. Regarding it, moreover, as susceptible of rigorous demonstration, we have attempted to trace the progress of that culture through which the world has been brought, and to point out the character

and bearing of its several parts, their relation to each other, their suitableness for carrying forward the process, and the general effect on the mind and condition of the human race.

But to understand any process of moral culture it is not enough to contemplate, however intently, its external mould and aspect. We must know the moral principle by which it is governed, or for the purpose of inculcating which it is conducted. The chief moral excellence of any created being must consist in its assimilation to the character of its Creator. To increase this assimilation must be the object of moral culture, where its original nature has suffered no perversion ; to restore it, where lost or impaired. The nature of the loss and perversion will also have an effect in modifying the process of culture and restoration ; as the peculiar character of a disease requires to be met by a corresponding peculiarity in the remedy. That man is a fallen being it is not necessary here to prove. Having broken the law of God, and incurred the penalty due to its transgression, his mind is necessarily hostile to that God, and that law, from whom he looks for nothing but condemnation. This, whether we acknowledge it or not, is now the natural state of the human mind ; and this points to the central evil by which our nature is possessed. Sin, being rebellion against God, must be alienation from Him, and consequently spiritual death ; from that inevitably follows the loss of any sure and authoritative moral standard, and thence moral

death ; and when the standard of morality is lost, there can be no indestructible basis for political institutions, which must all partake of that one central evil, the very nature of which is death, and must therefore contain within themselves the causes of their own dissolution. But this humiliating view suits not the pride of man ; and he must be taught his utter inability to rescue himself from the doom of ruin, which overhangs his entire being throughout all its range. For this purpose a tentative process is put in action, under which every faculty is drawn forth, and ample time and scope allowed for its complete development, and every resource thoroughly explored, that no rational excuse may remain, even no subterfuge be left for the convicted sinner ; and that all his own endeavours having ended in paralysis and death, and the malignity of moral evil having been displayed in the most appalling form, and to the most fearful extent, it might be apparent to the whole intelligent universe, how fearful a thing it is to violate the law of God, and how impossible for the violator of himself to expiate the guilt, or escape the punishment.

Contemplated in this view the history of the world assumes, like man himself, somewhat of a compound nature,—a body and a soul. It displays the external aspect of that culture through which it passed, fitted to draw forth the various faculties and resources of the human being ; and it indicates the correspondent workings of that

evil principle, which, stalking grimly along the same path, infused its deadly venom into every portion of the varied and growing process. The combined effect in which this twofold process terminates is found to be this,—a display of the human being, arrived at perfect physical and intellectual maturity ; but plunged at the same time into the depth of political corruption, moral degradation, and gross superstition.

Such is a brief recapitulation of the general ideas, for the demonstration of which the present work was undertaken—with what success it is for others to determine. It may be advantageous now to proceed, with similar brevity, to retrace the line of proof, restate the leading facts, and sum up the principal arguments.

Of the period between the fall of man and the deluge very little is known, and to indulge in conjecture would be fruitless. The extreme longevity of mankind, their progress in certain arts belonging chiefly to luxury and war, and the excessive depravity into which they sunk, we learn from the Bible ; and beyond that we have no information. One deduction only can with safety be made ; that the circumstances most akin to those of Paradise were found to be the very worst for a being no longer innocent ; whence the necessity for an entire dissolution of the then existing frame of nature, and its reconstruction in an aspect more suited to the character of the fallen being for whom it was to form a scene of physical, mental, and moral culture and proba-

tion. The world was destroyed, and the race of man perished in its ruins ; all but one family, from whom a second population was to spring, weaker probably in frame, certainly of shorter life, and surrounded with increased difficulties, arising from a depression and changeableness of temperature, lessened salubrity of air, and diminished fertility of soil. This was in fact a new commencement of the human race and system, under circumstances expressly adjusted to their altered character ; and from this period our disquisitions may be properly said to begin.

The times immediately succeeding the deluge may collectively be termed the Patriarchal Age. The recent dread catastrophe, by which the world had been overwhelmed, and the pious example and directions of Noah, the second father of mankind, kept the human race for a time, and but a short time, obedient to the laws and ordinances of God. Rebellion broke out, the simple rules and instructions of the patriarchal leaders were neglected and despised, and the leaven of iniquity began its fatal work. Instead of the government of Father, King, and Priest, founded upon the order of nature, paternal authority was spurned, arbitrary monarchy set up, and a separate priest-caste established. The liberty and the true interests of the community were thus overthrown and trampled on, partly by the king, who soon learned to regard the mass of the people as the mere instruments of his power ; and partly by the priesthood, who

perverted religion to their own selfish purposes, and kept the nation in ignorance, that their own falsehoods and absurdities might escape detection. This downward process of guilt and corruption began in a very early age; when, led by the first usurper, Nimrod, the race of Cush, inflated by pride, ambition, skill, and a rebellious spirit of self-dependence, threw off all restraint, mocked even the recent judgments of the Almighty, and commenced building that wonderful structure, the ruins of which still encumber the banks of the Euphrates. Driven from their insane purpose by an impediment so apparently slight as a sudden confusion of language; the heaving tide of that rebellious race rolled onward its disparted streams in different directions, and the aspiring mind of man sought, in other climes, for other means of gratifying its unsated thirst of power, knowledge, and distinction. The portion that remained in Babylonia, betaking themselves to the study of astronomy, speedily acquired the art of imposing upon ignorance and credulity,—assumed the power of predicting events from the *trines* and *aspects* of those heavenly bodies, the worship of which they had also introduced,—deluded their votaries into the errors of superstition, and drew upon themselves the deeper guilt of voluntary imposture. Even among the nations that continued to retain the patriarchal institutions, the patriarchal creed soon lost its purity: and by the time of Abraham almost the whole world had

sunk into idolatry, and consequently into moral depravity.

The seat of power, and also of scientific skill, and inventive intelligence was transferred to Egypt; and its results there served but to confirm the sad truth of man's corruption, already partially displayed in other countries. Men increased in numbers, advanced in civilization, and became skilful and mighty in war; till led by the conquering Sesostris, they subdued the greater part of Asia and Africa, then bent their skill in science and arts to the erection of stupendous trophies to perpetuate the memory of their victories. When now we gaze upon those wonderful fabrics, what do we behold but the melancholy monuments of departed greatness,—say rather of execrable tyranny;—erected at the expense of national liberty subverted, personal misery endured, and by the worn hands and peeled shoulders of whole continents reduced to bondage;—founded in violence and injustice, raised amid groans and imprecations, and cemented by human blood. But the evil has not exhausted its virulence. If we take one more glance at their obelisks and monuments, what mark we there? They are thickly encrusted with what we term hieroglyphics, or sacred writings, the meaning of which has been hid from the world for several thousand years, and of which learned men have only just discovered the alphabet. This mode of transmitting knowledge is an obvious advancement

in civilization, from that rude stage in which language is only spoken, not communicated by any other means, and must have seemed to promise much advantage to mankind. But it too partook of the fatal taint of sin, and was productive of moral depravity. Knowledge was monopolized by the priesthood; and being themselves corrupt, they corrupted its source. The mass of the nation, ignorant of the conventional meaning attached to those sacred emblematical characters, transferred their respect and veneration to the symbol itself, instead of the sacred subject it was intended to prefigure; and Egypt degenerated into the grossest idolatry, worshipping even noxious and loathsome reptiles. Egypt had seemed for a time to take the lead of the world in political and social improvement; and she was also the first to display the dismal spectacle of tyranny in the sovereign, deceptive knavery in the priesthood, and entire slavery and corruption in the people. If she attained an early maturity in power, wealth, and refinement, she exhibited also an early and a signal proof of the corresponding growth of moral evil, and its certain and baneful issue, depravity, decay, and final ruin.

The isolated and compressed character of Egypt forced a somewhat premature development of human nature; but the same circumstances prevented its exercising a disturbing influence to any serious amount on the natural course of mundane discipline on a more en-

larged scale. Asia was the scene of the human being's infancy ; and the powers and tendencies of the general mind that first awake, and are earliest cultivated, find their native region in the Asiatic clime, and are closely allied to what is still the Asiatic character. The patriarchal and Egyptian periods were those in which were made the first experiments of man in social union and civil and religious government. With the exception of the Egyptian monarchy, however, the civilization of man proceeded at first rather in sections, than in a connected sequence, and by means of the separate powers called forth in different nations, in consequence of the peculiarities of their local situation. The wide distances to which their migrations extended, rent asunder the community of mind, and was followed by the pressure of physical necessity, and the consequent retrogression of social improvement. The first difficulty to be surmounted, therefore, was physical necessity ; and this was most easily accomplished in countries like Egypt and Babylonia, where the climate is genial and the soil fertile, yielding readily a rich return to human labour. The struggle against physical necessity had caused the development chiefly of physical power in man, which depending upon the principle of combined effort, gave rise to the idea of universal dominion. But the overthrow of Nimrod's premature attempt, and the transfer of chief sovereignty to Egypt, retarded for a time the progress of the main trial in Central

Asia. The growth of nations, however, gradually filled up the intervening spaces by which they had been divided, and tended to reproduce a community of mind and interests among the human race. Conceptions of extreme magnitude and splendour filled the ruling minds ; but the mass of mankind were regarded as of no more value than the bricks, which, individually despised, formed collectively a pile of vast magnificence. Then it was, that ruling monarchies became not only the most fitting representatives of the various stages of man's mental and moral culture, but also the best means of carrying forward the process.

At length the Assyrian empire arose like a youthful giant, the beautiful, but capricious and despotic ruler of his feeblers compeers. Its principle of government was the patriarchal ; and by its progress and its fall it proved and displayed the evils entering incurably into that simple and noble form, when without a holy watcher within the shrine, and grown to extensive dimensions. Its issue was absolute despotism, enslaving alike soul and body ;—and consequently such a depth of degeneracy as to end in total annihilation,—furnishing a fearful example, that when an evil principle acquires the entire ascendancy, it will inevitably cause complete and irretrievable destruction. In Babylon the case was slightly different. That was an empire of conquest, and it did not embody the priestly element of the patriarchal system.

There, essential monarchy soared to its highest flight of power and splendour ; but having no enduring, or revivifying principle within itself, the splendour overgrew the power, wealth produced voluptuousness, pride degenerated into vanity and arrogance ; the keen intelligence of the priesthood, indignant at the insults which they had sustained from the haughty monarch, aided in the alienation of the public mind, which was then for the first time beginning to have an existence ; and the pomp, riches, and power of Babylon corrupted their possessors and rendered them a prey to the Medes and Persians, yielding another collateral testimony, that evil and destruction are synonymous terms. But before that dread consummation, and while still in the midst of its high and palmy state, God was pleased to reveal to the greatest ruler of that first general empire the nature and outline of that providential arrangement, according to which He deemed it right to govern, and instruct, and try the world. To Nebuchadnezzar was shown the visionary features,—to Daniel was revealed the intelligent spirit, of that wise and gracious scheme ; and the mighty process was thenceforward conducted on a scale of such stupendous dimensions, as to include within its range the most important parts of the three great continents, and to impart its own character to the chief branches of the whole departed, yet recombining family of man.

Onward swept the tide of events, widening in

its course, and extending its effects to a greater expanse of being than had before felt its influence. The Persian empire advanced in front of the nations, assumed the truncheon of command, and bade them observe and imitate her conduct. Political power was communicated to an aristocracy of birth, and thus a medium formed to break the vast descent from one sole tyrant to an empire of slaves. With power, wealth was delegated ; and with wealth, luxury obtained a larger sphere. An extension of social improvement followed ; but of precarious tenure and doubtful value. The unshared majesty of imperial Babylon had passed away ; the vision of loftiest power no longer haunted the mind of man ; the gold had given place to the silver, and the value was lessened if the polish was increased. A very few great efforts were enough to exhaust the luxurious and feeble-minded Persians ; and yielding to the bland influences around them, they made it their sole object to court voluptuous enjoyment. In its delight, at its conquest over physical difficulties, the mind of man seemed to have given itself up to the study of physical gratification. All the trappings of vanity, all the indulgences of sense, all that wealth could command and luxury desire, were cultivated to the very utmost ; as if with the purpose of refining human wants into intellectual pursuits and idealized enjoyments. Yet in the midst of this gorgeous and voluptuous scene, virtue had no abode, liberty was unknown, luxury corrupted the ruling few,

ignorance degraded the oppressed many, superstition held the souls of all in thralldom ;—and in the very noon-day of her prosperity the voice uttered to the ear of heaven by the empire of Persia, was composed of but two mingled cries,—the delirious shout of dissolute revelry, and the deep groan of utter wretchedness. What availed it that physical refinement, and the pleasures of the senses had reached their fullest possible development? This stage of the culture of man, necessary in itself, and occurring in its natural position, was very soon exhausted, and shown to have in it no tendency, nor capability to promote his moral regeneration. It was too pleasing, however, to depraved humanity to be willingly relinquished ; and though never afterwards carried to an equal height, could not be forgotten ; and has left a heritage of evil, which still exerts a baneful influence on the wealthy, the luxurious, and the vain. That it tended immediately to its own destruction it is not necessary to waste many words in proving ; for wealth and effeminacy absolutely invite the plunderer, at once by the richness of the booty, and the feebleness of the resistance.

The physical refinement of Persia had approached indefinitely near to the regions of intellect, furnishing evident tokens of what would probably be the character of its imperial successor ; as in the natural course of even an individual's growth the enjoyments of the young elastic frame, and the wild fever of the passions

on their first awakening into strength, soon yield before the purer delights of opening intelligence, and the nobler pleasures of expanding mind. The world had now reached that period of its progress when the reign of intellect should commence. The centre of attraction round which the hopes and destinies of mankind revolved, was now transferred from the banks of the Euphrates to the Athenian Acropolis; and Greece became in her turn, the world's representative and instructress. Never, since the time when the tempter first persuaded man to give credence to that fatal falsehood,—that knowledge was better than obedience to the will of God,—did there exist a country and a people so adapted to the task of training, to its highest stretch, the intellectual capacity of man. It is in this light that, if we would read her character aright, we must contemplate Greece, the very home of art, science, and literature, of every form in which genius puts forth its power, and wins its trophies; where the human mind in its most perfect state, was aptly lodged in a body of the most perfect organization, and placed in a land unrivalled for picturesque beauty, sufficiently barren to demand man's active energies for its cultivation, yet yielding an ample harvest to reward his industry;—where, in short, the human being reached the highest possible state of physical and mental perfection of which he seems capable, and produced works in every department of human skill or genius, which still

remain, and will perhaps for ever remain, unmatched.

Such was Greece, when to her was committed the intellectual and moral cultivation of the human race ; and what was the result to herself, and to the world ? Her music, her painting, her sculpture, and her poetry ; united in idealizing the fiercest passions, and the grossest vices of our nature, till they became objects of worship ; and her keen and well-trained intellect expended all its subtle powers in changing wisdom into sophistry, making it a boast, that it could furnish arguments on both sides of any question, or defend any cause however bad, acutely skilful in perverting right and wrong, and in making the worse appear the better reason. But this is even the fair side of the prospect,—the decent exterior which society wore in public ; and were we to penetrate a little deeper beneath the surface, or to draw aside the gracefully arranged drapery of concealment, how foul and loathsome the corruption we should then detect ! Here again the principle of evil manifested its destructive presence ; and as the advancement of the process had now brought into action the nobler qualities of human nature, the mortal venom also displayed a more enlarged and intenser virulence, and the moral ruin, approaching its dread and gloomy consummation, assumed a blacker and more hideous aspect.

But might not profound sagacity, and strong determination be successful, where aspiring in-

tellect, unguided save by the unsteady hand of rapt imagination, had failed? So far as analogy could furnish grounds there might yet be hope; for what the unsettled intelligence of opening manhood cannot accomplish, may nevertheless be achieved by the graver conduct of staid maturity. The composite brass of Greece had given way, and recourse was now to be had to the iron might of Rome. The Roman character, less inventive, less gifted with imagination, but more prudent, calculating, and resolute, than that of Greece, became the impersonation of the world's riper intellectual age. The last development of human nature was now to take place, the last experiment to be made; and time, circumstances, and people, all combined to render it the most favourable, and therefore the most conclusive, that could be imagined or desired. Trained to the utmost hardihood in the midst of surmountable difficulties, and skilled in the wise art of availing herself of all the attainments of preceding ages, suited to her condition and character, Rome, to the pride of Babylon, and the luxury of Persia, added what she thought expedient or could acquire of the civilization and subtle intelligence of Greece,—all arranged by the practical wisdom of her own sagacious mind, and knit together by her stern, unconquerable will. Thus endowed, disciplined, and resolved, the Roman empire held on its victorious career, till the subjugated world bowed beneath its sway, and on the Capitol was

fixed the throne of universal sovereignty. And what had Rome taught the world? That indefatigable exertion can conquer every thing.—That might is the only rule of right.—That all laws may be violated for the sake of obtaining dominion! If it could have been possible for imperial Rome to have continued in the possession of unshaken power, and maintained her inflexible attitude, the world would ere long have relapsed into what may be termed its second childhood, or the imbecillity and decrepitude of its old age,—into a character similar to the barbarism of its earliest monarchies, exhibiting nothing but the imperious will of the despot, and the mean cunning of the slave.

The process of the world's culture was now completed. There remained in the human bosom no more faculties to be called into action, no more capacities to be explored. The world had now lived a round of lengthened trial and cultivation, and passed through a series of changes, and of successive developments of human capability, throughout the entire range of human nature, political, mental, and moral, enough to prove, that not the most favourable circumstances and prolonged opportunities, could enable man unaided to shake off the thralldom of moral evil, or to escape from its fatal consequences, depravity, misery, and destruction. Evil had entered into all; and into whatsoever evil was found to have entered, upon that death straightway seized, as his lawful prey. Not the

primitive institutions and simple virtues of patriarchal ages ;—not the time-defying science of laborious Egypt ;—not the imperial magnificence of Babylon ;—not the luxurious refinements of Persia ;—not the noble genius of intellectual Greece ;—not the profound sagacity, proud glories, and stern resolution of Rome, vainly termed the “ everlasting city ;” not one, not all of these, by their successive, or by their accumulated efforts, while they drew forth the powers of man, could retard the parallel progress of sin, or prevent the fatal effects of its death-distilling presence. Nations arose in natural order, and regular succession, according to the wise arrangement of Providence, that the culture of the world might be carried suitably forward ; they sinned, because moral evil had taken up its abode in the heart of man ; and they perished, because the very essence of sin is destruction. The ruin of man’s physical nature was earliest made apparent in the effeminacy and licentiousness into which it sunk ; but the cultivation of his intellect was equally unable to check the spreading malignancy of the moral pestilence. The histories of Greece and of Rome have incontestibly proved, that all the efforts of human genius or wisdom have never been able to infuse into the mind of man the sound and vital principles of true morality,—true religion being unknown ; nor even to eradicate one vice from corrupted nature ; while on the contrary the highest intellectual cultivation has often rendered

men the more accomplished villains,—there being no necessary connection between intellect and morality, of which there exists one terrific proof, the great Arch-fiend himself possessing probably the highest created intellect.

It will have been observed, that the political principle had assumed all its different aspects, absolute or monarchic, aristocratic, and democratic, as it passed through its various stages and was modified by its different possessors, from the despotic patriarchal sovereign, through the aristocratic modification, to the republican or democratic form. Not that any one of its forms was ever altogether unmingled with at least the elements of the next ; but that at certain periods and in certain nations, these predominated, and even followed each other in a regular and strictly natural succession. Each political form bore within itself the cause of its own dissolution, as has been already shown ; and the chief characteristic difference between them was this :—the simplest form perished earliest, and when it perished, disappeared ; while more complex forms were later in reaching maturity, made a more protracted resistance to the progress of decay, and when completely corrupted continued to survive for centuries in all the hideousness of moral putrescence. Of the former kind the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires form examples ; of the latter, Greece and Rome. As no new political principle could be expected, no political renovation could take place, and each had

reached its dread impassable bourne. A counterpoising mixture of the three leading forms of political government was not possible among heathens ; because it requires that pure recognition of the rights of others which nothing but pure religion can inspire,—which nothing but Christianity can inspire. Even Cicero, whose profound mind could conceive the idea of such a government, did not imagine it practicable, however beautiful in theory.

The progress of mental civilization had been productive of similar results. Slowly, indeed, did the cultivation of mind proceed in the earliest ages of the world ; nor did it take the lead till after physical difficulties had been surmounted, and physical pleasures reached a very high degree of refinement. At length intellectual Greece began her training to wield the sceptre of the world, and give to the race of man the impress of her own character. The strange result was, the complete subversion of all the previously held principles of national or individual morality. Sophistry assumed the throne of wisdom, and amused herself in reversing the spells of all past generations. The morality that exists where a false religion prevails, can be no other than merely conventional ; and neither false religion nor conventional morality can withstand the shafts of ridicule from the bow of sophistry. In Greece, and afterwards in Rome, both religion and morality, such as they possessed, were overthrown by the keen attacks of ill-directed intel-

lect ; while the worst, the pseudo-philosophers, would not, and the best could not, devise any thing better to replace what they had wantonly destroyed. To such a state of the public mind renovation arising from any thing in itself was utterly impossible ; and it even began to decline from that degree and kind of civilization and refinement which had been reached. The inefficiency of any religious forms or beliefs then known need not be dwelt upon ; for since they had not been able in their time of power to purify the race of man, or even to preserve their own public and private influence, it was sufficiently obvious, that they could not restore what they had been unable to preserve, nor confer what they did not possess.

It may be added, that religion had always hitherto been so intimately connected with the state, as to form its central and ruling principle ; or was degraded into political subserviency and rendered a mere state engine. In either case nothing but evil could ensue, religion itself being corrupt, and incapable of imparting any thing but contamination to all that either sought or shared its influence. For this no remedy remained within the reach of man himself. A different arrangement indeed was seen in Judea, where alone pure religion existed ; but so strong was the “ middle wall of partition ” between the Jews and all other nations, that though very frequently brought into close contact and familiar intercourse with the ruling empires, there

originated no tendency on either side to blend,—the Jews being proud of their distinctive characteristics, the Gentiles detesting the unaccommodating principles of the Jews. The leaven was there ; but remaining compact and encrusted apart, it communicated nothing of its nature to the surrounding mass.

Such was the condition and character of man when the Roman empire attained its zenith ;—thoroughly matured, and thoroughly corrupted. Short of that point maturity had not been reached ; beyond it irrecoverable degeneracy must have commenced. Then was the crisis of human destiny ; for the growth of the human being had arrived at the ripeness of full manhood ; and the sin of his fallen nature had displayed its intense malignity. In that point met all the converging lines of Providential guidance, according to which had been mapped out the various allotments of the race of Adam. To the momentous character of that epoch all the voices of prophecy bore concurrent testimony ; because He who knew what was in man foresaw in what manner and at what time would be accomplished His own pre-determinate counsel, and thus governed nature and revelation in harmonious agreement with the laws of infinite and eternal Wisdom. Then,—when that had been fulfilled which was written, “ I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent,”—when “ the world by wisdom knew not God,”—when the

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last efforts of man had been exhausted, and the last foundation of self-dependence destroyed, and the last hope of self-recovery passed away,—when the heart of the universe seemed hushed into a dread pause of indefinite forebodings, and silently anxious expectation,—*then*, was it manifest, that “THE FULNESS OF TIME” had come, and then, “God sent forth His Son,” that the world through Him might be saved, and “that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

This might be termed the second and more glorious creation of man. The first Adam was the fountain of natural life ; and by his fall became the transmitter of sin, and its fearful wages, death. The cycle which then commenced had for its ruling principles the elements of vice and ruin. It was mortal therefore in all its parts ; and as it waxed old its loosened frame shook on the tottering verge of dissolution. The second Adam imparted a quickening spirit,—a new spirit of holiness, to expel the in-dwelling principle of evil, to restore the lost image of God, to destroy the power and the works of the Destroyer, and to purchase for man and bequeath to him the unsearchably rich inheritance of peace with God, everlasting righteousness, and life eternal. Then was revealed the great mystery of Godliness, “God manifest in the flesh,” to make known the love of God to man, and to turn the hearts of men to God ; and by the simple preaching of the

Gospel to accomplish that which the most benevolent sages had regarded as a beautiful but hopeless dream, and which even prophets had but indistinctly and in mystical language predicted. Then was a new thing brought to pass in the earth, such as had never entered into the visions of legislator or of poet, in the conduct and character of that marvellous Being, who “spake as never man spake,” and acted as none but God could act. Then went forth Jesus of Nazareth, meek and lowly, though the Creator and the Lord of the universe ;—healing the sick, raising the dead, and teaching those truths that purify and spiritualize the soul, yet homeless, reviled, and persecuted ;—possessed of sovereign power over nature, yet living a life of self-denial, and exercising His power but for the good of others ;—murdered by the malignity of the wise, the civilized, and the ruling authorities of this world, yet voluntarily submitting to die, that men, even His murderers, through Him might live ! Such a character and such conduct was what the world had never ventured even to imagine ; yet was perfectly natural in Him who was “ Emmanuel, God with us,” and was exactly that, the imitation of which was expressly calculated to expel the selfish principle of moral evil from the heart of man, and to restore to him the lost image of his Creator and his God.

But these are views somewhat beyond our present province, and on which we may not much

longer dwell. Yet there is one leading principle involved in them, which must now be stated, for the purpose of introducing the view, with the statement and brief illustration of whose outline our undertaking will find a suitable conclusion. In the character of this new representative of the human race there are some prominent features diametrically opposed to those entertained by men in general. There is a meek and placid humility of deportment, strikingly contrasted with the haughty and overbearing arrogance so prevalent in the world. There is a quiet gentleness of heart,—a degree of unresisting passive virtue or fortitude,—altogether different from that proud, restless, and fierce spirit, which keeps the stormy breast of man in a state of incessant turmoil. There is an entire and constant devotedness to the will of God,—a readiness to exist, to act, to suffer, not only without a murmur, but in a spirit of willing and cordial acquiescence, totally unknown to that selfishness and rebellious enmity against God, which is the very essence of the natural mind of fallen humanity. There was thus displayed in living reality a new rule and example of life and moral conduct by the new Head and Representative of man. Of this the central and essential principle seemed to be, self-denial. But self-denial being a negation, may serve to define, but cannot be, the positive principle. What that principle is, may best be stated in the solemn words of Him, by whom its action was first

exemplified,—“FATHER, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE !” That new and lofty principle then, is this;—The human will brought into absolute conformity,—may we not say identity,—with the will of God. It is to cast loose all delights, all passions, all desires, by which the soul is constricted, and earth-bound, and fettered to mortality ; and to imbibe that spirit of universal love, allied to all things, sympathising with all things, embracing all things, which cannot die, because it is the spirit of the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent Jehovah. This transcendently sublime principle is that, which, in “the fulness of time” the Son of God infused into the world, redeeming it, by the shedding of His own blood, from sin, misery, and death, that He might thereby render it capable of holiness, and happiness, and life eternal.

How great is the light shed upon the path of history by the heavenly beams of Revelation ! While we keep steadily in view the illuminated line traced by that celestial radiance, we are enabled easily to thread the otherwise inextricable maze. A few leading principles,—we might say one single leading principle, is made known to us, from the multiform operation of which every varied aspect wherein man and nations can be viewed took their origin, as may be proved either by an inductive or deductive process ; and thus a simple, intelligible unity of purpose may be seen working its sure progress throughout the whole onward course of the world’s existence. That

purpose was a deliberate, comprehensive, and incontestible demonstration of the deadly nature of sin; preparatory to an equally deliberate, comprehensive, and incontestible demonstration of the life-imparting nature of holiness.

While we pause in solemn contemplation of the mighty conflux of destinies that met in this momentous epoch, sable with the blood and surcharged with the wrecks of guilty and perishing man, we may be permitted one more brief retrospective glance on the turbid stream, for the purpose of obtaining a more distinct apprehension of the change in its emerging character, from which other changes of unspeakable value and interminable consequences have been ever since, and will be for ever more, evolving. It has been already shown, that every leading nation which at any time acted a prominent part in the great drama of the world, perished from the scene, while yet the echoes were repeating the sound of its most glorious exploits. They perished, because moral evil had poisoned the very foundation of their existence, and the tainted current "grew with their growth and strengthened with their strength," till the period of full maturity and entire corruption were the same, and the mortal *crisis* smote them in their very 'pride of place.' Were we to analyze the seemingly various causes which wrought out this deplorable succession of ruin, we might easily trace them all to that degrading, antisocial, demoralizing, and irreligious principle, selfishness. And the reason is obvious.

Religion is the only tie that can bind in sweet alliance man to his brother man ; for the love of God is the only fountain from which can flow the pure love of our neighbour. Its semblance, however, may for a time prevail. In the youth of nations the necessity of combining against the pressure and assault of surrounding difficulties, of whatever kind,—whether arising from the barrenness and inclemency of soil and climate, or the hostility of neighbouring nations, represses the selfish spirit, and gives birth to that generous enlargement of heart and public-mindedness, at once a characteristic and sure omen of national greatness. When the growth of power has surmounted or removed these difficulties, the selfish spirit of fallen humanity resumes its sway, weakens the social tie, isolates each individual into a position of unaccommodating rigidity, splits the social fabric into a multitude of separate and conflicting interests, each greedy of its fellow's gain, hateful and hating one another, till the shattered and weltering mass becomes the prey of some younger, poorer, more virtuous, and well-knit antagonist, or sinks exhausted into the incurable paralysis of national degeneracy.

Such was the almost unvarying course of proverbial 'rise, glory, and decline,' through which the nations passed previous to the epoch of Christianity. And the cause has been repeatedly stated,—the nature of fallen man contained no principle of perdurable vitality in itself, and its religion being equally fallen and corrupt, could

but impart additional and more lethal venom. Its ruling principle indeed was moral evil, therefore moral death; thence selfishness, therefore national depravity and social dissolution. Now let the contrast be marked. Christianity has infused into the heart of human nature a principle directly the reverse;—the principle of universal benevolence, resulting from love to God, and therefore to all His creatures. If the one cause death, the other must cause life: if the one be the principle of destruction, the other must be that of immortality. In so far, therefore, as Christianity becomes the ruling principle of any nation, the death, or utter extinction of that nation is impossible. Nor is this a vague assertion. It cannot be denied, that many of the most celebrated nations of antiquity have long ago entirely disappeared from off the world. Where are now the ancient empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia? Where the nations of Asia Minor, the princely traders of Phœnicia, the rich and powerful Carthaginians? The Persian exists but in name, the Parthian bow is terrible no longer, and for ages the neck of degenerate Greece has borne the yoke. But not one of the nations that have sprung into existence since the commencement of the Christian era, has ceased to retain its place and name in the human family,—unless in consequence of its obstinate refusal to imbibe the life-imparting Christian principle, or by voluntary apostacy and rejection of its vivifying spirit. Imperial Rome has indeed passed away; but the

whole body politic of that empire had been filled with the deadly infection before the birth-time of the world's second youth ; and it merely fulfilled its natural course, the last mortal, because sinful, monarchy perishing, that the kingdom of heaven might come, and the living principle of holiness begin its everlasting reign.

To aid in the infusion and development of this Christian, this immortal principle, is the peculiar province, and the high privilege, of the Theologian ; to mark its operations, whether in the individual or in the general mind, is well worthy the most studious care of the Philosopher ; and it may be very easily shown, that it equally claims and merits the profound attention of the intelligent Historian. The want of it, and the consequent possession of its opposite, wrought out the overthrow and desolation of all the empires of the ancient world ; and the history of each is merely an elucidation of that great truth, under a peculiar aspect. The history of man since the Christian era might be traced and explained in a similar manner ; taking for our guide the Christian principle in its operation in the heart and upon the conduct of society in general,—or rather of the whole human race. To trace this idea to its legitimate extent would open out a path of very interesting and useful investigation. It is, however, beyond our present purpose to enter upon more than the statement of its principles, elucidating our meaning by a very brief outline of their operation.

The history of the world, previous to the coming of Christ, may be justly considered as a connected series of demonstrations, that "sin when it hath conceived bringeth forth death!" The process was then completed, a new principle infused, and a new cycle commenced, the purpose of which was, to prove that "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Nor is this true in a spiritual sense only. Its application to nations may be best expressed in the words of our Lord to his disciples,—“Ye are the salt of the earth.” By this metaphorical expression it is indicated, that Christianity is the only sure conservative principle, whereby the immortality of either nations or individuals may be maintained. It has been said, that Christianity is the religion of civilized man. This statement, beautiful and cheering as it appears, must be admitted with some limitations. It has been shown, that man in the highest state of civilization, as in Greece and Rome, made no approximation to the pure spirit of Christianity; nor manifested the slightest inclination to receive it,—or rather regarded it with greater hostility than did less cultivated nations. In modern times we do not find that civilization and refinement pre-dispose men or nations to the reception of the Gospel; but very often the reverse. Does vital religion, on pure Gospel principles, make its way more easily among the refined and courtly classes of society, than among the less-cultivated, the poorer, the more simple-

minded? The answer is but too obvious;—yet it is what, while it strikes at the pride of man, is in exact accordance with the workings of his fallen nature. In one sense, however, Christianity may be said to be the religion of civilized man. Every other form of religion perishes before the growth of civilization; because the cultivated mind easily detects the sophistries of delusion and imposture, and scorns the extravagant absurdities of superstition. But Christianity, being truth itself, may be cast into the fiercest furnace of the most searching scrutiny, and it will come forth, not only uninjured, but in greater purity, or shining with more brilliant lustre. It is therefore the only religion which civilized man can truly entertain, or cordially embrace; though it does not certainly follow that he will do so, even when forced to admit its unrivalled claims to the homage alike of his reason and his feelings.

It is at the same time a truth, most honourable to Christianity, and most encouraging to man, that while the severest examination of the most cultivated intellect, can find no flaw in the one entire, and “perfect chrysolite” of the Gospel, wherever it is known, and its doctrines embraced, the character of man is elevated. The truth of this observation is admirably illustrated by the events which have so recently taken place among the South-sea islanders. When first discovered they were mere barbarians, and their habits were savage in the extreme; their

first intercourse with Europeans taught them little more than to add the vices of civilized man to the wilder usages of the barbarian ; but since the Gospel has obtained the ascendancy, their character and habits have undergone a complete change, to a degree perhaps unequalled since the times of primitive Christianity. This might furnish a very useful lesson to the philanthropist, guiding, while it encourages his efforts. It *is* possible to extend civilization over the whole earth ; but only in the train of true religion : it *is* possible to rescue man from the debasing thralldom of moral evil, and enable him to bear his brow aloft in the dignified freedom of moral purity ; but only by infusing into his soul the quickening and hallowing spirit of the Gospel, for “ where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Let the philanthropist lend his most strenuous aid, then, in the promulgation of the Gospel, assured that by doing so he shall be adopting the most efficient method of promoting the true welfare of man, throughout the entire range of his being, physical, mental, moral, and religious. The kingdom of darkness *must* perish ; but only when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Anointed. Let us then anticipate the day when the true philanthropist, the zealous missionary, and the faithful preacher of the Gospel, shall tread the same path, co-operate in the same labour, and be honoured to wear the same crown, bestowed by the King of kings, on those

who aided in His warfare, and partake His triumph. Education, a rise in tastes, habits, wants, and general civilization, the culture of the perceptive and ratiocinative faculties of the mind, may severally and collectively contribute much to the advancement of society : but all will be found ultimately ineffectual without the presence of that high and ruling principle which Christianity alone can give ; while true Christianity will infallibly be found not only to bring them all in its train, but impregnated and consecrated all by that principle from which they emanated, in which they exist, and towards which they are ever steadily directed,—the love of God in Christ, and a sincere and permanent desire to promote His glory, and the true welfare of His fallen, yet ransomed creature, man.

We have treated the political principle in its progressive workings and varied aspects, from its possession by a single person to its diffusion among the many, as a despotism, an aristocracy, and a democracy ; and have found in each modification only a different form of blended oppression and slavery, destructive to others and suicidal to itself. But were we to mark narrowly the influence of Christianity on the political principle we should be able to point out the beneficial effects produced alike on the rulers and the governed. To the rulers it imparts the true spirit of their office, instructing them that they bear the sceptre of power not for their own sakes only, but also, and especially

for the sake of the community, to protect the right, and repress the wrong,—to reward virtue, and punish vice. To the governed it gives the meek spirit of obedient subordination, teaching them that all power is of God, and that it is their duty not only to “fear God,” but also to “honour the king.” It enables men to know and value their own rights, by giving them correct views of their nature and destinies ; and also to respect those of others, by enlarging their minds to some conception of the wise arrangements of Providence in the system of order established throughout both the material and the moral universe. It thus guides and rectifies the political principle, to an extent and with a harmonious consistency of parts and purposes unknown in ancient times, by at once enlarging the intelligence and purifying the tone of the public mind ; and by modifying the power and ameliorating the spirit of government, rendering slavery and tyranny equally impossible, wherever it prevails.

The wisdom and the purity of political principles have been thought the best safeguards of national independence. This was more the case in ancient times than since Christianity infused a new principle into the heart of man. By that new principle he is bound to a purer and more disinterested line of conduct, and gifted with a vitality absolutely indestructible, except by himself,—by his apostacy from pure Christianity. It has already been remarked, that no nation

which began its existence since the Christian era has ceased to retain its place and name in the human family, unless by its obstinate rejection of Christianity, or apostacy from its doctrines. This may be easily proved. The Roman empire was poisoned to the core even before the "fulness of time," so that it could not survive, even though it subsequently assumed the semblance of Christianity. The lower Greek, or Constantinopolitan empire, was a vain and abortive attempt to reconstruct upon a degenerate Roman model, the still more degenerate Greeks and Asiatics, who had been by imperial authority christened, not by apostolical persuasion christianized. Their Christianity was pretended, their idolatry real; they filled the measure of their guilt, then sunk helpless and unpitied before the fierce onset of the haughty and cruel Moslem. Neither of these, therefore, forms an exception, or militates against the view already stated, respecting the conservative character of Christianity.

But modern history furnishes a more striking corroboration of this view. When we read the list of kingdoms, or glance over the map of Europe, one nation seems to have been blotted out. Poland has disappeared from among the powers that once composed the European republic of nations. Does not this melancholy fact contradict our view?—if rightly understood it establishes it. For many years previous to her partition Poland had been almost entirely

Socinian ; she had denied the vital and central doctrine of Christianity,—she had rejected the King of kings, and thus had sealed her own doom. That Poland was thickly peopled with Jews could be no preservative ; because they live under a destiny of their own, apart from all merely local considerations. The fall of Poland, therefore, and her fruitless efforts again to recover her regal dignity and independence, prove that apostacy from true Christianity is as fatal to modern nations as idolatry was to those of ancient times. It were well that all denominations of Christians, who truly hold “the truth as it is in Jesus,” and “honour the Son even as they honour the Father,” should beware of holding fellowship with those who teach “another Gospel, which is not a Gospel,” lest they be involved in the same inevitable destruction which awaits those who add to, or diminish from, the words of THE BOOK.

The French revolution furnishes another illustration of the same kind. Christianity was proclaimed a fable ; and the nation in its frenzy attempted to revive the forms and institutions of ancient Rome. Even Napoleon mimicked the titles of consular and imperial rank, and proved himself by all his conduct a disbeliever in, nay a rejector of, Christianity ; though it was in Egypt alone that he avowed his infidelity or apostacy. The consequences are known to the world. Both republican and imperial France have waned away ; and the monarchic form of

old France again fills the seat and discharges the functions of government. Grievously corrupted undoubtedly is the religion of France, and it was no less so before the revolution; still it avowed fidelity to Him who must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet; and therefore its independent existence was possible, and has been restored.

Viewed in a different light the same great truth presents to us another, and a very interesting aspect. It might be shown, that the prosperity of every people to whom the Gospel has been communicated, has exactly corresponded to the cordiality with which they have received its principles, and the extent to which they have obeyed its precepts. The purity also in which they have maintained the doctrines of genuine Christianity, would be found to be a very accurate measure, not only of their moral character, but even of their eminence among nations. The prevalence of those corruptions introduced by the Romish Church, for example, would be seen in every instance operating like a death-blight upon all the energies of the country where they were entertained, repressing all its generous aspirations, cramping all its mental powers, withering all its kindly feelings, and fixing it in the chilly stupor of moral lethargy. It is thus that Italy, Spain, Portugal, and with shame and sorrow we must add Ireland, have been spell-bound by the sorceress of Rome. So much of Christianity remains in Romanism, that

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its victims cannot die ; and so much of corruption that the vital action is suspended :—till the wild fictions of romance seem to be realized, and the human community that has drunk the cup of the Papal enchantress suffers all the agonies of continuous death, in the very heart of its indestructible immortality.

This, it will be observed, is a melancholy, but a most convincing proof of the truth of our position ; for the superstitious mummeries, and the gross licentiousness of Rome, would have caused the entire annihilation of any nation of antiquity within a much shorter period, than the ten or twelve hundred years that have elapsed since her corruption assumed its flagrant and enormous character. But the subject has also a brighter and more cheering aspect, bending across the blackness of the passing cloud the rainbow light of beaming and beckoning hope. If Christian principles be cherished in the bosom of a nation, it cannot perish. If they inspire its mind, guide its councils, and govern its actions, there is no degree of prosperity and happiness to which it may not attain. Of this the best proof is the unprecedented eminence to which Britain has risen since the period of the Reformation. This is a theme on which it would be equally easy and delightful to expatiate ; but that it lies rather beyond the limits of our subject. If, on the other hand, a nation in the noontide of its fortunes, and inflated by self-sufficient vanity, should permit Christian prin-

ciples to lie dormant and neglected, it may,—it will,—be left to the stern discipline of necessity, and may be suddenly bereft of all on which it had placed its trust. The foundations on which it had erected its tower of pride may be undermined; its external influence may be diminished; its internal peace interrupted; and its very national integrity and existence threatened. Still it possesses one resource of all-powerful efficacy to heal and to restore. Let Christian principles sway the sceptre, preside in the senate, and animate the public mind, and the difficulties which seemed to fetter its energies will be snapt at once asunder, like the cords from off the arms of Sampson; and it will go forth to the accomplishment of still loftier and more noble achievements than any which had ever yet adorned its history.

It is thus that Christianity proves itself the best benefactor of man in every possible manner. If it finds a nation in a state of barbarism, it imparts the spirit of civilization, together with pure morality and true religion. Where it finds society already constructed and advancing on its career of refinement, it improves every institution, suggests new arrangements, and imparts a disinterested and generous spirit to all, sufficient to render even imprudent measures productive of general good. And where it comes in contact with a nation in a state of decay, all whose institutions have become clogged in their motions, the public mind dissatisfied, corruption

extensive, and clamorous discontent universal, it can resuscitate even such a state, and infuse a spirit capable of restoring to it the vigour of youth. It can furnish sure and powerful principles on which a nation may retire on any emergency,—by which it may be reconstructed after any convulsion,—and which may rouse it out of the feeble and debasing languor of degeneracy. If this view were entertained and acted upon by Statesmen, how different would be their measures! Too long have they followed that imbecile but fatal policy of framing such measures as might suit the calls of the moment, doing just so much as might produce present quiet, and thinking of nothing beyond. Why will they not expand their minds to a full comprehension of the dread, the sublime importance of their station and their duties? A nation is immortal: and its legislators should act always under the noble consciousness, that their measures are destined to stretch onward into the far for-ever. Parties and factions may cast their shifting shadows across the scene; but the true statesman, borne along in the spirit and power of national immortality, should regard them no more than clouds drifting over the autumn-sky. He should regard himself as a steward in temporal things for the Church of Christ,—that Church in and by which is displayed to the whole intelligent creation the manifold wisdom of God. In this spirit his acts will partake of that eternity to which they have continual re-

ference ; and the nation will hold on its prosperous and glorious because Christian career, with calm untroubled grandeur, “strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”

This may be illustrated by an example which all may understand and feel interested in. We hear, for instance, from all quarters, the gloomy and ill-omened outcry, that the sun of Britain has passed its noon, and entered on its downward course ere long to set behind the grim clouds of national ruin. If there be any ground for such melancholy forebodings, it is in the neglect of Christianity, which has allowed the anti-social principle of selfishness to extend its baneful influence in a manner almost unprecedented. But let the Gospel warm the heart of the nation into universal benevolence,—let it inspire the public mind with that generous feeling of self-denial which thinks no sacrifice too great for the sake of the general welfare,—and how easily would all our jarrings be reconciled, and all our difficulties brushed away ! “ You forget the national debt ! ”—cries one prophet of evil. And what of the national debt ? Were Britain a nation of Christians, not in name only, but in reality, and every man to deny himself, as he ought, to all unnecessary and luxurious gratifications,—or to submit to considerable privations, equally his duty if required, the national debt might be paid in less time almost than it would take to sum it up in,—if its entire payment were thought indispensable for the public good. Men

may please themselves by boding evil, if to indulge in evil bodings be a pleasure. But the Christian knows, and the politician ought to know, that Christian principles are the only sure basis,—and an indestructible basis—on which to found national prosperity ;—that by adhering to them adversity cannot greatly shake, and never shall overwhelm it ;—and that its restoration is at all times, and under all circumstances possible, by calling in the aid of their pure, unworldly, re-vivifying and re-invigorating spirit.

It must nevertheless be admitted, that a nation may mistake its malady, and consequently make application to a wrong medicament. In this respect also Britain may furnish an example. The commercial energies of the nation have been cultivated to their utmost capability,—even to that point where exhaustion and consequent reaction commences. Capital is now stagnating, or collected into bloated masses, or ceasing to be reproductive, while the community no longer enjoys its healthful diffusion through all its parts, at once stimulating and rewarding industry. Selfish distrust on the one hand, and envious discontent on the other, are rending the higher and the lower classes of society asunder, destroying all the humanizing influences of sympathy and gratitude ; paralyzing with terror, or plunging into degradation and misery, ominous of national decay. Political schemes of amelioration, so loudly boasted and fondly trusted in, have been tried and appear to

be ineffectual; and if this state of things cannot be amended it must follow, that Britain has reached her climax, and her future course must be one of decline. But we are not yet hopeless, even in the midst of all these lowering disquietudes. One remedy remains. Make men good Christians, and they will infallibly become good citizens. It is to religion alone that we look for safety in the day of weakness and alarm. The high and self-denying principles of Christianity may still infuse new life and vigour into the heart of the nation, by expelling all narrow and malignant party feelings; purifying and expanding the heart; enlarging the generous and kindly exercise of charity and universal benevolence; and inspiring that love of our neighbour, emanating from the love of God, which is the only sure foundation of equal laws, pure justice, true morality, and all those social virtues which alone can render a nation peaceable, prosperous, and happy. This is a lesson our legislators have yet to learn: if they learn it, and act upon it, Britain may cast off every burden, extricate herself from every entanglement, and commence a new course of prosperity more noble than ever in its character and aims. The world is her field, and the ocean her chartered domain. The light of the Gospel has long shone, and still shines, on her with a purer and a steadier radiance, than on any other land beneath the skies. There is nothing earthly beyond the reach of her capabilities, provided it

be the pleasure of the All-wise Ruler of the universe to give her henceforth, to conduct her energies, Christian statesmen, who fearing God may have no other fear.

Another peculiarity in the new cycle of events consists in the relationship between church and state. Before the Christian era religion was either a state engine, or was itself the state principle. In the patriarchal times the principles of religion and government were identical, and the possessors of priestly offices and state authority were the same persons. The corruption of the one necessarily involved the corruption of the other, and led to the destruction of both. Among Asiatic nations, in general, so much of the patriarchal spirit and system was retained, as to give to religion the character and influence of the primary principle of government; and its operation upon the public mind and public liberties was most baneful, as has been already sufficiently pointed out. In Greece it exercised less influence upon the public mind of a political nature; though continual efforts were made by the cunning priesthood to extend their power by proclaiming the prescience of oracular responses, and extolling the value of propitiatory rites, for securing the favours of the deities. Even then the priests were more often employed as tools of the designing ruler, than they were able to control or modify his purposes. The Macedonian gold could induce the Delphian priestess to Philippize; while not even

the thundrous eloquence of Demosthenes could scatter the thin delusion. In Rome the priestly and the governing powers were long connected by a perfect identity of interests, arising partly from the very common union of the offices in the same person, partly from family relationship in their possessors, and partly from reasons of state. The result was to produce hypocrisy in those who ruled and deceived,—ignorance and superstition in those who were governed and deluded,—and the entire corruption of the public mind in its central principles, whence nothing could follow but the degradation of its entire being, throughout all its faculties, and in all its compass.

But neither the Author and Finisher of our faith, nor any of his immediate disciples, sought any such intimate connection with the state. On the contrary His express declaration was,—“My kingdom is not of this world :” and when in subsequent times, his followers neglected that fundamental maxim, and sought for a worldly kingdom, from that moment visible Christianity began to acquire a worldly spirit, to be defiled by worldly corruptions, and to become stationary, or even retrogressive, instead of continuing, as before, to go forward conquering and to conquer. Not that the abuses and corruptions which so visibly disfigured the Church soon after her connection with the state, in the time of Constantine, were so much the results of that connection, as of a previously existent corrupt and worldly

spirit. They were not the disease,—they were its symptoms ; and became apparent when the Church usurped the functions of the state. The great Papal corruption is of course included within this general observation ; for it was in reality a *temporal πολιτεία*, clad in the vestments, using the language, and assuming the pretensions of religion. It has been the misfortune of Episcopacy also, to be involved in this intimate and blending connection with government ; consequently it is perpetually liable to all the evils thence resulting, both in the secular spirit which it acquires, and on account of the political odium to which it is exposed. This political odium is excited against such a church with even greater virulence than against the state ; because the latter is a fluctuating, the former a permanent, body ; and while the one is hated only for its own actions the other is overwhelmed with a continually accumulating load. This being the case, the greatest advantage the state can confer upon the church, after securing to her the possession of her due maintenance and her rights, and the freedom of worshipping according to the requirements of conscience, guided by the word of God, is to avoid all tampering with her spiritual functions, and most carefully to refrain from degrading her into a piece of mere political machinery.

At the same time we are very far from advocating the opinion, that there ought to be no national establishment, and that it is not the duty

of a government to provide the means of religious instruction to the people. As we believe that the welfare of the community is the chief object of government, and that religion is the most effectual means of attaining that object; so we hold it to be the most imperative duty of a government to provide and protect the means of giving to the people permanent instruction in pure and true religion. But this it never can do if it degrades the ministers of religion into mere tools of state. This matter would be more clearly understood, but for an unnecessary complexity in the form under which men are accustomed to consider it. That it is the duty of the state to provide for the religious instruction of the community, and to protect the property already consecrated to that sacred purpose, by those who had every right, legal and moral, to set any portion apart, according to the dictates of reason and piety,—is one proposition, simple and intelligible, and capable of the clearest demonstration on its own grounds. That it is the duty of the teachers of religion to avail themselves of every legitimate mode of extending the influence of the Gospel dispensation, whose stewards and ministers they are,—can scarcely be questioned by any one of clear and unprejudiced judgment; and flows naturally enough from the former proposition. But that it is their duty to seek for an intimate, blending, and political union with the state, is quite another,—very questionable as a mere matter of policy and expediency,—and

to which the Scriptures give no shadow of support.

It is in the distinction between these two views that the essence of the question consists ; and the facts of the case appear to be the following : In ancient times religion and government were always connected ; and always to the detriment of both. The Founder of Christianity and his immediate disciples sought no such political connection, but continually inculcated obedience to all legally constituted authorities. Their object was to make men good Christians, knowing that they must then be good citizens ; and they sought for no other mode of influencing government than by imparting the pure and immortal principles of the everlasting Gospel to those by whom the reins of power were held. When a corrupt and worldly spirit crept in, the Romish Church usurped the functions of civil government, and erected a throne of superstition and imposture, on which her proud form appeared wearing the triple crown of mental, moral, and spiritual tyranny. In England the Established Religion is hampered in all its movements by its too intimate connection with the state. Even those improvements, which all are agreed would be most desirable, cannot be readily accomplished, because of that foreign and curbing influence. The Church of Scotland also, by far the purest and most spiritual in character and constitution since the times of primitive Christianity, though jealously excluding political interference with her

spiritual government, has not altogether escaped from the benumbing influence of state and lay patronage ;—for where fallen human beings are the agents and administrators, there will be a mingling of human errors. While the state ought undoubtedly to possess the absolute control over temporal and political concerns, every ecclesiastical society ought to enjoy equally absolute authority over those spiritual matters and peculiar laws, by which alone its individual integrity can be maintained. The functions of a state, and those of a Church, are essentially different, and ought never to interfere with each other. When they do it is directly injurious to the one or the other, and ultimately to both. The common result seems to be this : By such political interpenetration a corrupt Church enslaves a state ; a pure Church is enslaved by a state ; and either case enslaves the community. Let the one give to the other protection from external violence, requisite support, and preserve to it the use of all legitimate and spiritual privileges ; and let the other in return impart the pure spirit of true religion, sound morality, political regeneration, and national immortality. But let them not tamper with each other in their peculiar duties ; least of all let the Church be politically blended with the state. Were it entirely released from that most unpropitious alliance, we might hope to see it become again aggressive, light up afresh its smouldering torch, and make powerful inroads into the regions of darkness, extending on

all sides the kingdom of the Sun of Righteousness.

There is yet one general topic on which a few remarks ought to be made. Although Christianity seeks no peculiar connection with politics, yet involving as it does the entire range of human interest, it cannot but exert a very powerful influence upon political affairs. We have marked the process through which the political principle was developed in its successive allocations in more or less numerous bodies of society; and we have beheld its inefficiency to produce national regeneration, or to confer national vitality on any. But after the infusion of a new principle of holiness and life into the mind of man, at the "fulness of time," a similar process was followed, as might easily be shown did our limits permit. Slowly did it descend beneath the monarchical elevation; because no man is willing to relinquish the possession of power, especially when he is its sole possessor. At length the feudal barons, and other hereditary nobility became the holders,—in reality, if not ostensibly,—of political power, and they retained their grasp with equal tenacity, though not through an equal length of time. In the present times the tendency is undoubtedly for the political principle to become vested in the middle classes, if not in the body of the people. This tendency is beheld with the utmost alarm by some, and with unmingled delight by others; and the fears and the hopes of both are to a

great degree visionary. The truth is, that the altered position of the political principle is not nearly so great as it seems. It is not so truly the political principle that has descended, as the intelligence of the people that has ascended. It is more than probable, that the people who now possess political privileges are at least as intelligent, in every point of view, as were the barons of king John's time, by whom the Magna Charta was won. This would lead us to rejoice, rather than regret, that a greater portion of our fellow-men were able to form accurate conceptions of their own duties and privileges as members of society.

Those, on the other hand, who entertain sanguine hopes of the great advantage likely to result from this extension of political privileges, would do well to moderate their expectations. They must have read and studied history to very little purpose, who have not observed the almost inevitable tendency of political power to produce a tyrannical spirit in its possessor. But he who is a tyrant over others, is invariably a slave to his own passions; and thus tyranny corrupts and degrades both those whom it oppresses, and those by whom it is wielded. The extension of the political principle then, cannot of itself produce any beneficial effect upon society; and if unaccompanied by an equal extension of Christianity, may be of the utmost detriment. No despotism was ever so terrible as anarchy;—no positive law so oppressive as

the absence of all law ;—no tyranny so malignantly savage as that of an irresponsible mob. Yet this is the result which will inevitably take place if political power come to be the exclusive possession of the many, unless their hearts be controlled by the mild influence of the Gospel of peace and love. We are unwilling to hazard prophetic conjectures. Yet, looking back on past events, and forward on “the mighty stream of tendency,” we cannot help thinking that the present political agitation throughout the world, bears the aspect of a preparation for some mighty change, preceded by some equally mighty disappointment. Political power has passed through the various grades of society, and is now vested, or on the point of being so, in the lowest which is competent to wield it. It has not regenerated any by whom it has been enjoyed, except in so far as they were guided and purified by Christianity. And as in the present outcry for political power, very little, if any, reference is made to Christian principles, we cannot anticipate that they will be allowed to exert a sovereign control over those who may acquire power without feeling moral and religious responsibility. Should this be the case, disappointment of every kind will probably seize upon all the political agitators, their partizans, and their deluded followers ; and in its disgust the mind of man will be ready for any change, however violent, even though it were to absolute despotism. That, however, will not probably be the result ; for

the vital principles of Christianity will always furnish a sure rallying point in every human emergency ; and when man has again explored his resources of every kind, irrespective of Christian principles, he will then be ready to betake himself to the shelter of the rock of ages, the only sure refuge against the storms of time that howl across the wilderness of life. This view would seem to indicate the coming of what might be termed ‘a second fulness of time ;’ or what Scripture terms, “the restitution of all things,” and to which perhaps the Apostle alludes in the expression, “the dispensation of the fulness of times.” But respecting these times and events, unknown, however glorious, we shall not venture to form or utter the vague speculations, or groping conjectures of discursive and erring human fancy. “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God ; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Here we pause, before taking leave of the subject which has so long, and we trust not unprofitably engaged our attention. We are far, very far, from supposing that any thing like justice has been done to its dread importance and majestic grandeur ; yet miserable indeed must have been the failure, if it has not awakened in the mind of the reader, as it did in that of the writer, sentiments of grateful adoration, by the view which it affords of the wisdom, love, and mercy of our God, in his gracious

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dealings towards his fallen creature man. It is indeed a truth to the very letter, that "godliness is great gain, having promise both of the life which now is, and of that which is to come;" for there is nothing to which it cannot impart inestimable value, by stamping upon it the impress of its own heavenly character, and infusing into it the ever-springing freshness of its own immortal nature. The man in whose soul it dwells, be his station what it may, becomes adorned with a moral dignity, and partaker of a moral courage and greatness of spirit, a capacious enlargement of mental intelligence, and a sublime elevation of character, by the consciousness of those high destinies of which he feels the earnest living and glowing within him, and the faith-imparted foretaste of that "excessively exceeding and eternal weight of glory," of which he is the joint heir with his Redeemer. It removes from his mental eye the films of human ignorance and prejudice, places him upon a more commanding watch-tower, than his fellow-men; unveils a portion of the mysteries of Providence, and enables him to read the hand-writing of God in the world's history. It gives him strength to cast a far-perceiving glance over the ocean-stream of Time, where he beholds in the rise and fall of empires but the sweep of a broader and a redder billow, all, amid their restless heavings and turmoil, uniting to bear onwards over their weltering bosom the Ark of God's promise and man's salvation;—till

in "the fulness of time" the little hill of Calvary becomes the Ararat whereon it rests in the midst of the surges of guilt and ruin, that gurgles greedily around the perishing race of Adam. It reveals the true character of that awfully important epoch, marks and explains the nature of the redemption purchased, and the new principle infused, and carries him forward, tracing the brightening path along which the new and spiritual creation travels, with up-raised and hope-enlightened eyes, bleeding, yet conquering, in the might of Christian patience;—till, in prophetic vision, on the verge of faith's far-distant heaven, he may dimly descry the mysterious "sign of the Son of Man," coming at "the restitution of all things," to establish the holy and glorious kingdom of peace, and righteousness, and happiness eternal. Overpowered with the majestic sublimity of these heavenly themes, we can but add, in the words of the beloved Apostle, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus."

NOTES.

NOTE [a.] page 19. *Special and General Providence.*

It might seem incredible, were it not a common fact, that numbers of intelligent and educated men can be found, who attempt to disjoin from each other the doctrines of a special, and of a general Providence. They are willing to hold a general Providence, presiding over the great masses of events, and giving to them direction, but leaving all minute matters to the fortuitous operation of what they term general laws. Now it might be easily shown that the denial of special, is equivalent to the denial of general Providence; and that the admission of general, involves that of special Providence. As, for instance, in the material world the discoveries of modern science, have proved, that there are fixed numerical proportions according to which alone elementary substances can be combined. This fact is found to prevail in the minutest specimen of compound substances which human skill can analyze; and there are very striking indications of a similar law among the planetary bodies. From this the conclusion is obvious:—that the same all-pervading Care and Intelligence at first arranged and continually preserves these proportions, from the equipoise of suns and systems in their sempiternal round, to the minutest atom that hovers in the sunbeam. A similar deduction might be made with regard to the destinies of kingdoms and individuals. If a kingdom arise to glory, or sink into decline, it is invariably in consequence of the character and abilities of those by whom its energies are wielded. The private fortunes of such individuals must of course be watched over by a special Providence, lest the whole should be frustrated, as it might by the most trifling mishap during the infancy or youth of its des-

tined statesman or hero. But this inevitably involves the same Providential superintendence of all who come into contact with the future great man, whether as nurses, attendants, or playmates. This again involves their intercourse with, or dependence upon, the whole range of their friends and kindred ; and thus the widening circle can find no limit till it embraces the whole of mankind.

Every person will be able to recollect incidents of apparently a very slight and unimportant nature, which have nevertheless been found to have been pregnant with the most momentous consequences, and even to have given colour to his whole existence. It may be difficult, or impossible, to assign any sufficient reason for the occurrence of such incidents at a particular time and in a particular manner ; but it will be generally found that they have a wonderful adaptation to the character of the person to whom they chiefly refer ; and if our perceptions were more accurate, and our survey of events and consequences more extensive, it would be seen that their number, position, and influence, were all pre-arranged with as much exactness, and in proportions as definitively fixed, as is ascertained to prevail in the material world. To one idea more the investigation might lead. The laws of matter are what they are in consequence of the fiat of the creative Will. But they cannot have any such inherent power as to preserve themselves in these what may be termed arbitrary proportions. Their preservation, therefore, must be secured by the constant care of the same creative Will, as actually and efficiently present, as in the moment when the creative mandate was uttered. The presence of God throughout His creation is that alone by which it is continued in being. Nothing can therefore, by possibility *occur* without His special Providence ; because nothing can *exist* without His special Providence, exerting its creating or preserving energy ; so true is it, that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

It is not meant that any great degree of philosophy is necessary to perceive the inseparable connection between special and general Providence ; this a very moderate share of mental acumen would easily apprehend. But the reason why men

do not universally perceive and admit it, is because they *will not*. In this, as in very many other instances apparently of mental obtuseness, the true defect is of a purely moral nature. Men cannot wholly stifle the still small voice of conscience within them ;—its warnings may be generally disregarded, but it incessantly whispers its half-heard denunciations against evil, disturbing the repose of the guilty soul. Now nothing could give such strength to the accusations of conscience, as the full conviction that every action, even every thought, lay at all times open before the Omniscient and Holy God. But this is an inevitable consequence of the doctrine of a special Providence ; and it is on that account that men are so unwilling to give it admission into their minds. How terrible to the licentious and worldly-minded man would be the certainty that all his evil thoughts, words, and deeds, were beheld and registered with even a special cognizance, by the awful Being, one prerogative of whose nature it is, to be his present Witness, and his future Judge ! Roused into full action by such a tremendous belief his conscience would be ever condemning him, and compelling him to anticipate his doom. To avoid or escape from such a state of mind, there are but two possible methods. A man must either, so far as he can, banish from his mind all thoughts of God ; or seek a full reconciliation with Him. The first method is that adopted by those, who in order to indulge in their immoral practices, and at the same time to enjoy a fallacious peace of mind, deny the doctrine of a special Providence, and rejoice in the miserable delusion, as if they had succeeded in excluding God from His own creation. The other method is that followed by the true Christian, whose sole desire it is, to see God in all his works, to observe the manifestations of Divine power, wisdom, mercy, and love, in the arrangements of His Providence, and in every thing throughout his whole existence, to walk and commune with his creating, preserving, and redeeming God. In this, as in all other moral and religious subjects, the Christian philosopher alone is he who can arrive at the knowledge of the truth.

Note [b.] page 24. *The Origin of Evil.*

It is not our intention to enter deeply into the very obscure discussions which have so long occupied the minds of philosophers and metaphysicians respecting the origin of evil. Why evil should be permitted to exist in the creation of an All-powerful and All-benevolent God, without implicating either His power or His benevolence, is a question which it is not perhaps possible for the mind of man in the present state clearly to solve. From the solution of Epicurus, however,—viz. that the supreme Deity does not take the trouble to interfere in the affairs of the world, but having created it and its inhabitants, and endowed the whole with all requisite powers and capacities, left it to its own direction,—from this solution every right-minded man has been anxious to escape ; and accordingly very many hypotheses have been framed, with different degrees of plausibility, but perhaps no one wearing the impress of undoubted certainty, or approving itself at once to the mind, so as to produce conviction. It is not our intention either to present an abstract of the various theories promulgated by men of great learning and ingenuity on this very difficult subject ; or to state confidently our own view of the matter, as one capable of solving a question so long agitated to so little purpose. Yet conceiving some approximation may still be made, and that every candid attempt may be useful, even if it should be unsuccessful, the author ventures to lay his views briefly and with much diffidence before the public. He would not arrogate to them any particular value ; yet he will not deny that he thinks they contain somewhat more than mere hypothetical plausibility,—else they should not have been written ; and to the disposal of that wise Providence he leaves them, the excellency of whose working it is their object to vindicate.

If we trace human knowledge as far back as we can, in order if possible to arrive at its primary elements, we shall find that we are absolutely ignorant of what constitutes the essence of any substantial existence. All that we know of the material universe seems to consist in our perception of

the *relative qualities* of those substances which compose its mass; and even these relative qualities we discern only by means of *their opposites*. Forms and qualities we take to be indications of something in the internal constitution of things,—something in their essence,—which distinguishes them from all other things, and prevents the possibility of their sinking into one confused and formless chaos. But that essence itself human analysis is utterly incapable of discovering. Not only essences bid defiance to man's investigation, but even those secondary and distinguishing qualities are made known to us by an indirect process. We know qualities only by their opposites; heat, for instance, we know by its opposite, cold; and light, by its opposite, darkness. And not only do these qualities by their contrast mark and define each other's limits; but they are the only means of making known to us each other's existence. Had there been no darkness we should not have known that light existed. Were we capable of living in elemental heat, we should have no conception of any other state of existing, and therefore could not know that it was heat, unless by being brought into a condition to feel and to know its opposite, cold. It seems, then, the characteristic of human knowledge, that we know substances but by their qualities, and qualities but by their opposites;—that we do not know what any thing certainly and essentially *is*;—and that the amount of our knowledge of any substance or its qualities, is an approximation to knowing what it *is not*. Perhaps indeed, it may be the peculiar prerogative of the Being alone who can create and endow with qualities, to know what is the positive essence of any created thing. The *perhaps* we believe might be struck out; for since the being and continuation of every thing are equally dependent on the same creative and preserving energy and sovereign Providential superintendence, to discover essences would be to find out the Unsearchable.

This view may be transferred to the moral world; only there the elements of our investigations are of a nature so subtle, that our deductions must be warily made, and stated with some degree of hesitation. In attempting to state moral distinctions we find the same difficulty of pointing out what

is the positive and essential character of any idea, which has been already noticed in the material world. Mental and moral qualities we regard as the distinctions of some substantive existence which we call *mind*, or *spiritual being*. This spiritual existence also is absolutely unknown to us in its nature or essence ; and all our knowledge of it is confined to its qualities, which we commonly term *attributes*. Now these attributes follow the same law already specified in the qualities of material things, and are themselves discoverable only by their contrasts. Right is defined and marked out by wrong, justice by injustice, evil by good. Further, as all created spirits derived their existence from Him who is the Father of spirits, their essences and their attributes are equally emanations from the same unapproachable source. For this reason, again, it is absolutely impossible to discourse the essential nature of any spiritual existence ; or even any other knowledge of its attributes, than what is pointed out by their contrast ; and any one class of them might therefore exist in the utmost plenitude, and yet not be known by those of whose being they formed the sole elements. Here again the knowledge of positive essence is the prerogative of Him who is the source of being—the infinite and eternal I AM.

If the preceding view be correct it will follow, that the knowledge of all created intelligence consists in the perception of contrasts ; and that the necessary mode of acquiring knowledge is to endeavour to discover what a thing is *not*, in order to arrive at some approximation of knowing what it *is*. Our knowledge, therefore, separates itself into two great divisions, namely *negative* and *affirmative or positive*, of which the *negative* is the prior, and the more suited to the nature of created mind. Hence, in order that *good* might be known, it was necessary that *evil* should be permitted to exist. For if *evil* had not been permitted to enter into the created universe, that universe might have been perfectly good in itself, and also in the eyes of its all benevolent Creator ; but it could not have understood or appreciated the goodness of its own condition. In order to point out the excellence of good, the gracious Creator permitted the existence of its opposite, evil. This dark quality therefore exists and is valuable not

for itself, but for its results ; as that method by which alone the spiritual creation could have obtained the intelligent, and consequently the rational, grateful, and adoring perception of good, and of Him who is essential goodness. Instead of being an imputation upon the goodness, or the wisdom, or the power of God, that evil exists in the universe which, for His own glory in the manifestation of His infinite attributes, He created "by the word of His Power," it may perhaps be the unavoidable result of the imperfection incident to created existences, and at the same time the wise method by which is displayed the graciousness of His own condescension to the weakness of created intelligence, devised, guided, and overruled by infinite wisdom, mercy, and love.

This view seems to be perfectly consistent with all that scripture teaches on the subject. We are there informed that even in the angelical world there exists an evil principle, furnishing to those high intelligences the needed contrast, that they too may be able from rational conviction to adore the thrice-holy Jehovah. We there learn also the very early entrance of evil into the material world, and even into the heart of its chief inhabitant, man. The very natural process by which this was effected has seldom been rightly marked. As knowledge is separated into two great divisions, the *negative*, and the *affirmative or positive*, of which the *negative* is the prior ; so is there a corresponding division in our mental affections, namely those of *aversion* and of *desire*, from which are produced our two great ruling passions, *fear* and *love*. When man was created it is plain that his knowledge could be no greater than his experience had been ; and that he could form no conception of a state of things different from that in which he then found himself. The first command he received was addressed to his *fear*, as a prohibition enforced by a penalty ; and was in exact conformity with that original and constitutional principle or law of his mind, which constituted *negation* the first step of knowledge. "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt *not* eat ; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This command, though sufficiently distinct and formidable, was we know very soon transgressed ; for being applied to man's

principle of *fear*, and his feelings of *aversion*, as every prohibition, and every species of *negative* knowledge must necessarily be, it had much less influence over him, than if it had been, or rather *if it could have been*, addressed to his feelings of *desire*, and to the principle of *love*. To these, accordingly, the tempter addressed himself, and prevailed. "And the serpent said,—*"in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened ; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."* Mournful, indeed, was the knowledge thus obtained ; for man began then to know and value *good*, as he still best knows and values *happiness*,—*by its loss* ; while being the violation of a positive command, it was positively criminal, and therefore exposed man to the penalty due to actual guilt. But from even this deplorable fall there was one mighty advantage gained. Man having learned to know and to fear that *negative* quality *evil*, it was become possible for him to be made acquainted with *positive good*, and thus to be engaged in the service of God by motives addressed through the feelings of *desire*, and to the great ruling principle *love*. This was immediately done by the promise of a future Deliverer,—the Seed of the woman, who was to bruise the serpent's head. In this condition we find the revealed will and word of God exactly adapted to the two leading principles of the human mind,—making man capable of knowing *good*, by having previously known its opposite *evil* ; and leading him to avoid the one, and to seek the other, through the agency of the great principles of *fear* and *love*.

Some may think that this view is not consistent with the language of Scripture respecting the hateful character of sin, in the sight of God. This objection admits of a very easy answer. We have pointed out already the manner in which the entrance of evil into our world may be charged upon man as positive guilt,—it being the violation of a positive command. In this respect it must have been offensive to God, even were we to allow evil to be considered as a merely negative principle. But when employing the term *negation*, we are very far from meaning *neutrality*. We cannot tell whether it be perfectly correct to affirm that such negations as cold, and darkness, and evil, have a positive and essential

existence ; but being the direct opposites of heat, and light, and good, they have an inevitable tendency to destroy these qualities. Now whatever tends to destroy, must be hateful in the sight of the God of creation. Destruction, indeed, is the very antagonist, the necessarily hostile principle to essential being,—to Him who is essential life. Moral evil, therefore, or sin,—for the terms are strictly synonymous,—is the principle of destruction,—is decided “enmity against God,”—and cannot be beheld by Him without indignation, as striking at the very existence of His created kingdom, and even lifting its rebellious head and guilty arm against himself. Divine benevolence, or essential good, confers life ; the negative principle, evil, has its essential existence in destruction, for “the wages of sin is, death.” All positive existence, all real good, is from God ; while all negation, all imperfection, all evil, is from the creature, on account of the inevitable defectibility of its nature, as necessarily a limited, and therefore a fallible being. The creature not having by possibility life in itself, must, if left to itself, tend to relapse into a state of nothingness ; passing, through the painful and gloomy process of disease and corruption, to that dread consummation, death temporal, spiritual, and eternal. Now the pride of the creature induces it to withdraw itself from God ; from that follows the immediate action of the malady of finite nature, and the miserable result would be, sure destruction. Thus the negative and defectible qualities inherent in the nature of created being, become the causes of ultimate destruction, towards which they incessantly tend by a process unspeakably horrible in itself, and most hateful in the sight of God. In every point of view the whole amount of *good* in the universe is *positive*, and has its origin in the benevolence of God ; while the whole amount of *evil* in the universe is *negative*, and has its origin in the essential and unavoidable ignorance and defectibility of created beings.

This view seems to vindicate the nature of God’s moral government, showing that He is the sole author of good, and the creature the sole author of evil. The existence of evil in the universe is not therefore any just ground for arraigning either the power or the benevolence of God. But

the means which He has devised for the purpose of redeeming the perishing race of Adam furnish a display of His wisdom, mercy, and love,—when the incarnate word was revealed to the world, “The brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person,”—of a nature so transcendently glorious, that it now engages the adoring attention of angels, and shall form the song of the redeemed for evermore, in heaven, and before the throne of God and of the Lamb. The imperfection of the creature has become the occasion of manifesting the infinite perfections of God; and by the ineffable union of the Godhead and manhood in Christ, men are, in the words of the Apostle, “made partakers of the Divine Nature,”—the Holy Spirit of life dwelling in them gives them essential life and holiness; and thus the wonderful scheme of redemption obtains its full consummation at “the restitution of all things” in securing the eternal happiness of man, and displaying the unimaginable glory of God.

NOTE [c.] page 27. *Uncertainty of Chronology, and Historical Authorities.*

There is perhaps no subject on which the human mind has bestowed so much study, and with so little advantage, as chronology. To read the various tables, constructed with the utmost care by learned men, and mark their extreme differences, while each supports his own view, and demolishes all others, is perfectly bewildering. About a dozen different dates are assigned to the period of the Deluge, giving an extreme difference of not less than 1142 years! The dates of the Exodus vary by an extreme difference of 336 years; and not less than 588 is the extreme difference of the dates assigned to the reign of Sesostris. The division of the earth among the descendants of Noah, and consequent migration of mankind, is variously given, from 115 to 541 years after the deluge; and it might be proved that neither extreme is correct, while it is impossible to point out any date to which some strong objections may not be made.

It is needless to multiply examples. The result is plainly this,—that it is perfectly in vain to attempt fixing the specific

dates of any very ancient events,—and happily it is perfectly unimportant. The certainty of the events having happened by no means depends upon our being able to fix their precise dates ; while at the same time there are coincidences and presumptive approximations of a very remarkable kind. The statements of the Bible, the Chaldean computations, and the most ancient Chinese records, agree in assigning to the deluge a date almost identical. Between these authorities there could be no collusion ; and the inference is, that all are nearly correct. Infidel cavillers are beginning to find every weapon either wrested out of their hands, or turned against themselves. Even the famous Hindu tables, about which so much noise was made some years ago, have been proved to be an imposition. They have been examined by La Place, by Cuvier, by Delambre, by Bently, and by Davis, and their fallacious character clearly ascertained. It has been proved also, that they were constructed on a retrogressive calculation, and assume an epoch invented for the purpose ; since it is inconsistent with known principles of which the fabricator was ignorant,—an ignorance however which would not have prevented him from stating facts and observations correctly, had these been its origin. While, therefore, we admit that specific dates are not to be depended on in very remote antiquity, we maintain, that not even the shadow of an argument can be brought from chronology calculated to shake the credibility of the Bible history.

It is to be regretted, we think, that these views are not more generally entertained ; as they would tend to abate, on the one hand, the presumptuous confidence of the infidel in his array of dates, and on the other, the unnecessary alarm of the less learned Christian, at the spectacle of his boasting adversary's columns of cyphers. It might also save many a well-meaning man from wasting his time in the very unprofitable task of attempting to fix the future dates of unfulfilled prophecy. True, when a definite term of years is mentioned, nothing could be easier than to tell when it will terminate, if we were sure when it began. It never certainly could have been the intention of Providence in giving man these prophetic numbers, to enable him to read future events,

with all their specialities of date and circumstance, in a kind of anticipatory gazette;—and yet that is what some men seem to expect. This, however, the All-Wise Disposer of events has rendered perfectly impossible, by permitting all ancient dates to fall into inextricable confusion; so that while we know enough to satisfy our faith, excite our hopes, and stimulate our vigilance, we are effectually withheld from what could only gratify our curiosity, encourage our presumption, and destroy our free agency.

Before concluding this note it may be expedient to add a few words on the subject of historical authorities consulted in the composition of this work. The general scholar will be at no loss to discover the sources whence materials have been drawn, without the aid of a multitude of references, with which it would have been easy for the author to have garnished every page. The less learned reader, on the other hand, would have only felt his attention drawn aside by these references, without reaping any countervailing advantage. To the one they are not necessary; to the other they would not be useful: they have been therefore omitted. The work contains, besides, very few, if any, statements which would require to be corroborated by quoting the original authority; and the author is not desirous to incur the charge of vanity or pedantry, by making any unnecessary parade of scholarship or extensive reading. He may be allowed to mention, however, that he is not aware of any source from which information could be drawn, which he has not consulted; and that he has generally verified all the statements made by modern writers on the authority of the more ancient, by having recourse to the originals,—a labour from which he feels inclined to save his readers, by not laying the temptation before them. Having preserved the greater part of his references, he will be ready to comply with the wish of the public, should any desire for such references be manifested, and an opportunity be furnished for giving them. There is not, so far as he is aware, certainly never intentionally, one single event exaggerated, distorted, or in any way misrepresented: as for the reasonings and deductions, these are generally his own, and are open to fair and candid criticism, which he

would rather seek than shun, his object being the establishment of truth, not the maintenance of a favourite theory.

Note [*d.*] page 47. *The Sibylline Records concerning the Titans.*

One of the most remarkable events of remote antiquity is that known in mythology, by the name of the War of the Titans. The fabulous attire in which it appears has prevented it from receiving that degree of attention from professed historians which it merits, and would have well repaid. In our classical studies we are made familiar with its name indeed, but at the same time we are taught to regard it as a pure fiction ; or at most as some obscure war of succession among the ancestors of the mythic personage, Jupiter. But when we find the same account of some mighty conflict, pervading all the earliest traditions of nearly every ancient nation, we are compelled to conclude that it must have taken place at some period, when the families of man were yet so little removed from their original settlement as to be all more or less within its influence. No period later than that of the building of Babel and dispersion of the first rebels and idolaters, will meet the circumstances of the event ; and that does so with surprising exactness. All who are familiar with the Theogony of Hesiod will immediately revert with delight to his sublime description of the Titanic wars. But Hesiod did not invent the subject of which he has made such splendid use. Many other ancient authors, not in search for poetical materials, have made repeated mention of the same great conflict. Several of these are to be found in the works of Josephus, Eusebius, and others, collected from Abydenus, Berosus, Theophilus, Athenagoras, &c.

The fullest and most particular account, however, of the Titans, their wars, and their overthrow, is to be found in the Sibylline records, as given by Theophilus of Antioch, and alluded to by Josephus. It details the confusion of tongues, describes the demolition of the tower of Babel by a supernatural tempest, and states the dispersion of the dismayed

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builders as having taken place in consequence of these miraculous events. It points out the time when the Titanic war began, as the tenth generation after the Deluge, states its duration as having been ten years, and calls it the first war in which mankind were engaged. The almost exact concurrence of this account with that given in the Bible, is very remarkable; and proves how little ground there is for cavil against even the briefest and most casual statements contained in that sacred volume. It should be observed that the Sibylline records are not only very ancient; but that they belong also to that least suspicious of all kinds of evidence,—favourable testimony given by an enemy, as the Sibyls were originally priestesses of the Hamonian race, and were possessed of ancient memorials, deposited in the temples where they presided. The oracles of Dodona were uttered by Egyptian priestesses, who had been carried away from their native country, by some Phœnician traders or pirates. It might be shown, that wherever there existed a Sibylline temple or oracle, there was, or had been, some intimate intercourse with either Egyptians or Phœnicians, generally the latter, whose commercial spirit carried them everywhere in quest of gain or pillage. By tracing back the Sibylline records to this source we find the earliest form of idolatry bearing unexpected testimony to the authenticity of the historical statements of the Scripture narrative,—and thus even falsehood furnishing reluctant evidence in favour of truth.

The word Titan, itself, is by Bryant, derived with much probability from *Tit*, the same as the Greek *τιτθις*, *mamma*, a breast; and *an*, or *ain*, the fountain (of light or fire): hence Titan would mean a conical mound or elevated structure, with an altar on the summit, dedicated to fire, or the Sun-god. By a very common process in ancient records, the God worshipped, the mode of worship, and the worshippers, are frequently designated by the same interchangeable term: and thus the worshippers of the Sun-god were called Titans. This agrees exactly with the fact, that Magianism and Zabaism were the earliest forms of apostacy from true religion; and being worshippers of fire, these earliest apostates were Titans. Again, the followers of Nimrod, descendants of Cush, and builders of

Babel, were certainly the first apostates; as such, worshippers of fire, and as such, therefore Titans. From all this the conclusion seems inevitable, that the actual conflicts between the apostate and idolatrous Cushites, and the yet uncorrupted, the sacred race of Shem, after the overthrow of the impious chief *πυραθειὼν*, or fire-tower of Babel, and the mythological wars of the Titans, were the same event, casually glanced at by the sacred historian, and overlaid by fable, or wilfully misrepresented by profane authors.

As Hesiod may be supposed to be in the hands of every scholar, and the Sibylline records are not quite so accessible, and yet very interesting, we shall select a few passages :

Ἄλλ' ὅπῳταν μεγάλοιο Θεοῦ τελέωνται ἀπειλαί,
 Ἄς ποτ' ἐπηκείλησε βροτοῖς, δι' οὐρανὸν ἔτευξαν
 Χώρην ἐν Ἀσσυρίῃ, ὁμόφωνοι δ' ἦσαν ἅπαντες,
 Καὶ βούλοντ' ἀναβῆν' εἰς Οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα,
 Αὐτίκα δ' Ἀθάναντος μεγαλήν ἐπέθηκεν ἀνάγκην
 Πνεύμασιν· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἄνεμοι μέγαν ὑψόθι πύργον
 ῥίψαν, καὶ θνητοῖσιν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι ἔριν ὤρσαν
 Τοῦνεκά τοι Βαβυλῶνα βροτοὶ πόλει οὐνομ' ἔθεντο.
 Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πύργος τ' ἔπεσε, γλῶσσαι τ' ἀνθρώπων
 Εἰς πολλὰς θνήτων ἑμερίσθησαν διαλέκτους,
 Παντοδαπαῖς φωναῖσι διέστρεφον, αὐτὰρ ἅπασα
 Γαῖα βρότων πληροῦτο μεριζομένων βασιλῆων
 Καὶ τότε δὴ δεκάτῃ γενεῇ μερόπων ἀνθρώπων
 Εἰς οὐκ ἐκ κατακλυσσιὸς ἐπὶ προτέρους γενέτ' ἀνδρας.

* * * * *

Τηνίκα δὴ πατὴρ τέλεος χρόνος ἵκετο γήρως,
 Καὶ ῥ' ἔθανεν· καὶ παῖδες ὑπερβασίην ὄρκοισι
 Δεινὴν ποιήσαντες, ἐπ' ἀλλήλους ἔριν ὤρσαν,
 Ὅς πάντεσσι βροτοῖσιν ἔχων βασιλῆϊδ' αὖ τιμήν
 Ἀρξέει· καὶ μαχέσαντο Κρόνος Τιτᾶν τε πρὸς αὐτοῦς.

* * * * *

Αὕτη δ' ἔστ' ἀρχὴ πολέμου παντέσσι βροτοῖσι·
 Πρώτῃ γάρ τε βροτοῖς αὕτη πολέμοιο καταρχή,
 Καὶ τότε Τιτάνεσσι Θεὸς κακὸν ἐγγυάλιξε.—Theoph. ad

Autolyc. lib. ii. p. 371. As quoted by Bryant.

“But when the judgments of the great God were ripe for accomplishment, which he had denounced upon mankind, they erected a tower in the land of Assyria, being all of one language; and their purpose was to ascend the starry heavens. But then the immortal God issued his dread fiat to the winds, and the winds shattered the tower from its foundations, and confusion among men ensued, and the name of Babylon was given to the tower. But when the tower was overthrown, and varied dialects were formed in human language, they turned away according to their different tongues, and the whole world was filled with articulate speaking men. These things occurred in the tenth generation of men from the time when the deluge overwhelmed primeval mankind.—Then the lapse of time brought the aged father’s life to its close; he died, and his sons conceiving a dire disregard for oaths, excited strife against each other, contending who should possess the regal power over all mankind; and Cronus and Titan fought against each other.—This was the beginning of war to mortals, for then began men first to engage in hostile conflicts; and thenceforth the deity inflicted calamities upon the Titans.”

This remarkable passage might be corroborated by reference to others very similar preserved by Eusebius from Abydenus, and from Eupolymus; and by Josephus from Alexander Polyhistor. True, they do not amount to absolute proof of the view which we entertain respecting the identity of the followers of Nimrod with the Titans; but collectively they give to it a greater degree of probability than belongs to any other hypothesis. The Greek verses quoted above are of course only a version of the Sibylline records, made by some Grecian who had access to the temple where they were kept, and either understood the language or obtained an interpretation from the priests.

Note [*e.*] page 69. *Melchizedek.*

To state the various opinions that have been entertained respecting Melchizedek, would be to write a volume, instead

of a note. After perusing not a few of these opinions, we have found no reason to change that which we were at first led to adopt, and which is stated in the body of the work ; namely, that Melchizedek was the patriarch Shem. Faber argues that he could have been no mere human being,—that he was, in fact, the Messiah himself. Surely every unprejudiced mind will perceive the improbability of this supposition ; were it only because of the singular confusion it would introduce into the language of the Apostle Paul, in the fifth and seventh chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews. In this seemingly obscure passage, one thing at least is abundantly clear,—that the nature of Christ's priesthood is illustrated by reference to that of Melchizedek ; and it would be a singular mode of illustration to explain a thing by reference to itself.

The difficulty consists in the common error of understanding the language used respecting Melchizedek, as applicable to him personally instead of functionally,—to his character as a man, instead of to the character of his priesthood. Besides, the object of the Apostle, in the whole of this epistle, is to prove the superior dignity of the Christian, above that of the Mosaic dispensation. For this purpose the two are brought into juxtaposition, and a parallel drawn between them throughout all their peculiarities. The Levitical priesthood was an institution which contributed greatly to the pomp and external grandeur of the Mosaic dispensation. But the Apostle proves that even as a priest, the dignity of Christ was far greater than that of the sons of Aaron. This he does, by showing the superiority of Melchizedek to Abraham, and consequently the superiority of his priesthood to any that could be held by the race of Abraham, especially as it was vested in the sons of Levi. Now some of the characteristics of the Levitical priesthood were of a restrictive nature : such as, that they should be strictly of the sacerdotal race, both parents being of the tribe of Levi ;—that they should not enter upon the ministrations of their sacred office before they had attained the age of thirty, and could hold it no longer than till fifty.

The priesthood of Melchizedek, on the other hand, was subject to no such limitations. Being the patriarchal, it combined the regal dignity of a king with the sacred character of

a priest. No express limitations of time could be assigned for its duration. It began whenever the chiefship of a tribe devolved upon the heir of its chief family by the death of his father, and continued till his own death, so that it had no assignable "beginning of days," nor any definite "end of life." With perfect accuracy, therefore, might such language be used of Melchizedek in his character as a patriarchal priest, possessing an inherent right, and exercising inalienable functions, over which time had no control.

Still there is one point in which he differed from all other patriarchal priests. They owed their regal and priestly dignity to their descent from the chief of the tribe, paternally at least. The language used respecting Melchizedek represents him as differing from them in this respect; and this point has proved an insurmountable obstacle to many who would otherwise have regarded him as a royal patriarchal priest. Is there any thing in the character of Shem which meets this difficulty? We think there is. The patriarchal supremacy was strictly one of primogeniture. Now Japheth was the eldest son of Noah; and therefore had a right to the patriarchal dignities and functions upon the death of his father. Shem, however, was selected by the discriminating fiat of God to enjoy the patriarchal honours, and to him and his line was restricted the promised Deliverer. His priesthood, therefore, was the patriarchal, in contra-distinction to the levitical, and consequently without any assignable limits to its possible duration; yet he did not receive it as his birth-right by the law of primogeniture, and in this his possession of the sacerdotal character was different from that of every other patriarch. To this peculiarity his name may even allude, as names in those early ages were always significant. The word Shem may mean, *he who is placed*, and may refer to his elevation to the patriarchal dignity by the express appointment of God. At all events the characters and circumstances of Shem and Melchizedek bear a much closer resemblance to each other, than could those of Melchizedek and any other human being, and the supposition that they were the same person is liable to fewer objections than any other with which we are acquainted.

There is reason to think, also, that Japheth sunk into idolatry; and we know that Ham did so very early. This would give another element to the priesthood of Shem, namely, that of exclusive fitness for its enjoyment and exercise. In this respect again it differed from the levitical priestly race who might claim their right to assume the priestly functions on reaching the proper age, altogether irrespective of their personal fitness.

It might be shown how exactly these characteristics of the priesthood of Shem, or Melchizedek, agree with those belonging to Christ as a priest. His priesthood was also regal;—it had neither beginning of days nor end of life, for it existed from eternity in the purposes of God, and it continues for ever;—it was of Divine appointment, and apart from the direct line and tribe in which the priesthood was inherited;—and it belonged to Christ in virtue of His exclusive fitness to undertake and to discharge its sacred, solemn, and awfully important functions. These characteristics met, in an inferior degree, in the priesthood of Shem, or Melchizedek; and they centered with infinite fulness in the priesthood of Him, of whom Jehovah himself declared, “Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

Note [*f.*] page 75. *Egyptian Dynasties.*

Egypt, with its wonderful river, its mighty structures, and its numerous dynasties, has always attracted the attention of those who engaged in historical investigations,—and with very little success. Even the most ancient Greek historians are completely lost in the vastly more ancient records or traditions of Egypt. Of late the most sanguine expectations have been entertained that the hieroglyphic riddle of the Sphinx would speedily be read, even in its native hundred-gated Thebes. The true nature of hieroglyphic writing was discovered by Dr. Young, and its study prosecuted with the most enthusiastic ardour by Champollion. Unfortunately the researches of the latter gentleman, and still more his conjectures, were not always conducted by the soundest judgment. Assertions

made with the utmost confidence it has been found necessary to retract, and this has tended to cast suspicion, not to say discredit, on many of his real or assumed discoveries. A reaction has begun to take place; and it is probable that the ultimate result of the present investigations and discussions, in which many learned men are engaged, will be, to rest in the conviction, that while the extreme antiquity of Egypt is fabulous, it is yet one of the most ancient of nations,—that all its ascertainable history agrees with, and frequently illustrates the statements of the Bible,—and that with regard to dates of reigns, numbers and duration of dynasties, etc. etc., “all that we know is, nothing can be known.”

It would be of little value to present comparative tables of dynasties, furnished by Manetho, Syncellus, Herodotus, and Diodorous, either from Eusebius, or as given by Marsham, Perizonius, and a whole host of other authors, coming down to those of the present day. It is surprising, and even amusing, to see men of sense and learning wasting their valuable time and acquirements in the abortive attempt to arrange the succession of dynasties, and thus to make out a connected chain of chronology, overlooking the fact that several kings of different dynasties are actually stated to have been reigning before the conclusion of the dynasties which they are represented as having succeeded. Thus the fifth king of the eighteenth, a Theban dynasty, expelled the Hyksos, and yet his four predecessors are counted as immediately succeeding the dynasty of the Hyksos. There is also a singular absurdity in the account of the Hyksos, who are divided into three dynasties, and the middle one termed Hellenes,—or as some translate it Greek Shepherd-kings. How there could have been a dynasty of *Greek* Shepherd-kings at a time when if Greece was inhabited at all, it must have been by those rude barbarians who lived in caves, and fed on acorns, they have not the kindness to inform us. The truth seems to be, that the name, Hellenes, was applied to the Hyksos, as distinctive of their religious tenets and observances. They were, as we have attempted to show, the main body of the Cushites of Babylon, reunited after many years of dispersion and wanderings, in which they had acquired a more savage ferocity of

character, without losing their religious peculiarities. Being Magians and Zabians they were worshippers of fire, and of the Sun-god. The name El-ain, the fountain, (of fire, or light,) was given by them to the Sun; hence arose the application of a similar term to themselves, which not being understood, degenerated into the word, Hellenes, and was supposed to have reference to the inhabitants of Greece, of whom, many years, or almost ages, afterwards, it was the proper name.

Few precise dates have been, or are likely to be fixed by modern research; but enough has been done to confute the extravagant pretensions of the Egyptians, and to cut away from infidel sciologists all hopes of weakening the credibility of the Scripture record by means of the superior antiquity and accuracy of Egyptian annals. This, though of little positive value, may serve to silence a cavil, or neutralize an objection, and leave the path of truth more unimpeded. Beyond this we venture to predict, that no important discoveries will be obtained by the deciphering of hieroglyphic inscriptions; simply, because they contain nothing important to be discovered.

Note [g.] page 77. *The Posterity of Ham.*

Lest our attempts to trace the posterity of Ham should be thought too fanciful, it may be expedient to quote in corroboration a remarkable passage from the Asiatic Miscellany. "In the Rozit ul Suffa it is written, that God bestowed on Ham nine sons; Hind, Sind, Zenj, Nuba, Kanaan, Kush, Kopt, Berber, and Hebesh; and their children having increased to an immense multitude, God caused every tribe to speak a different language; wherefore they separated, and each of them applied to the cultivation of their own lands." Many of these names point out the descended nation with sufficient distinctness; though it would be rash to assert that some of the names were not invented to suit the nation. Of these sons of Ham, and nations sprung from them, Hind, Sind, and Kanaan seem to have settled in Asia, viz. in

Hindustan, in the countries adjoining the Indus, and in Palestine. This agrees both with the Bible, and with ancient historical traditions. Indeed in proportion as we press our inquiries into the more remote antiquity, the more evident does it become, that the Indians and the Egyptians were originally branches from one common stem. It may be added, that the coincidence between the account quoted above, and that given in Scripture respecting the confusion of tongues, is very remarkable, each referring it to a single division of mankind,—the one to the sons of Ham expressly, the other to the population collected in the land of Shinar, which we conceive to have been the descendants of Cush, son of Ham. The remaining names may be easily traced in Africa.

Note [h.] page 81. *The Hyksos, or Shepherd-kings.*

The passage of Manetho, respecting the Hyksos, as given by Josephus, is too interesting to be omitted.

“ There was once a king among us called Timaus. During his reign, I know not how, the Deity became adverse; and suddenly from the parts towards the East a people of unknown race had the courage to invade the country, and subdued it without resistance. Having mastered the former rulers they savagely burnt the cities, and razed the temples of the gods. They treated the natives with the utmost cruelty; the men they slew, and made slaves of the women and children. At length they chose one of their body for king, whose name was Salatis. He dwelt at Memphis, levying tribute on the upper and lower country, and putting garrisons in the most important places. But he took particular care to secure the eastern frontier, being apprehensive that the Assyrian power, then very formidable, would from that quarter invade the kingdom. And having observed a city in the Saitic nome, commodiously situated on the east of the Bubastic channel, called Avaris, from some ancient theological tenet, (καλουμένην δ' ἀπὸ τίνος ἀρχαίας θεολόγιας Αἴαριν,) he repaired and fortified it very strongly, and placed in it a garrison of 240,000 men. Hither he used to come in

summer to furnish them with corn and pay ; and to keep them in a state of discipline, for a terror to foreigners. The whole body of this people were called Hyksos, that is, Royal Shepherds ; they are said to have been Arabians."

The passage goes on to give the names of the successive kings, and relates that at length a king of the Theban race, "aided by the other kings of the country," defeated and shut them up in Avaris ; but being unable to take the place, granted them a safe departure. It is added that they being afraid of the Assyrians, settled in the country of Judea and there built the city Jerusalem. The very various and contradictory hypotheses that have been framed for the explanation of this very interesting fragment, are almost innumerable. Josephus forms the strange and untenable supposition that it alludes to the Jews, during their residence in Egypt from the time of Joseph to that of Moses. There could not well be a more improbable conjecture. If this part of Egyptian history can be elucidated, it will remove much of the obscurity which overhangs the rest. Nor is the attempt altogether hopeless.

These shepherd-kings called their strong hold Avaris, a name founded on some allusion to their ancient theology, that is, a theology more ancient than the worship of Ammon, with which alone Manetho was acquainted. Now the oldest form of heathen worship was that of fire, or light, in Hebrew אֵשׁ, *aur*, whence the Greek *Αἴαρις* ; consequently the name of the city alluded to the worship of light or fire, that is to Magianism, the chief religion of the followers of Nimrod, the Chaldeans or Cushites, certainly more ancient than the worship of Ammon. Syncellus calls one of the earliest dynasties the Auritæ, which may allude to the same people who built *Αἴαρις*, and were worshippers of fire. They destroyed the temples of the Egyptians, because their own purer theology could not tolerate the degrading idolatry of that people ; and we know that many ages afterwards, when Xerxes invaded Greece, he caused the temples to be destroyed for the same reason, he being also a Magian, and worshipper of the sun, under the open cope of heaven. Herodotus was informed that the pyramids were built by one Philitis, a shepherd, who kept his cattle in those parts, and whose memory was held in such abhorrence, that

the inhabitants would not even repeat his name : he was considered also, a contemner of the Gods. The etymology of Philitis, points obviously to Pali, which in Western Asia, and even in India, signifies a shepherd ; and agrees with the statement, that the shepherd race retired to Palestine, which may have had its name from that circumstance, Pali-stan, the land of shepherds. Again, there is a singular passage in Eusebius, which seems to throw additional light on this historical problem, if we may be allowed a slight emendation. The passage, as given by St. Jerome, is the following : “ Sub Acherre in *Ægypto* regnavit alienigena rex, Oris Pastoris filius, septimus ab Inacho.” It is plain that the shepherd, Orus, could have nothing to do with Inachus, king of Argos ; but if we read, *Septimus a Noacho*, the seventh from Noah, we shall obtain a clue to the meaning. Orus is the Sun-god, the Al-orus of the Babylonians, or Nimrod, in their ascription of divine honours to their kings. Any of his direct descendants might in the oriental style be called his son : And the seventh from Noah would give the very period about which the destruction of Babel, and the consequent dispersion of the Cushites took place. We have already seen that the incursions of the Chaldeans into Idumea, when they devastated the possessions of Job must have been above a century before the birth of Abraham, or about 2,130 years B. C. Archbishop Usher also places the invasion of Egypt by the shepherd-kings, about a century before the birth of Abraham, an approximation of dates very remarkable, if we think of the extreme looseness of ancient chronology. At any rate, the accordant convergence of so many separate lines of evidence, renders the conclusion almost inevitable, that the Hyksos, or shepherd-kings, who invaded Lower Egypt, were in reality the main body of the Cushites, who fled from Babylon upon the destruction of their impious tower, and the sudden confusion of their dialect. Their only safety lay in avoiding those countries where the families of Shem abounded, especially the justly incensed Assyrians, of whose resentment we find them entertaining serious apprehensions, even when in Egypt. After their first dispersion the main body appears to have bent their course along the shore of the Arabian sea, till they reached the straits

of Babelmandel. Whether they attempted to cross it in a hostile manner cannot be known ; but there was no probability that they should be able to make any impression on the established and consolidated kingdom of Meröe. They would then direct their progress along the Red sea, till they reached the isthmus of Suez, where they found the Delta particularly suitable for a pastoral people, it having been recently drained by the Memphitic kings, the successors of Menes, but not yet fully inhabited, and the government in an unsettled state, in consequence of the contests between the secular sovereigns and the powerful caste of priests, supported by the influence, and occasionally the arms, of the mother-country, Meröe. Availing themselves of these dissensions, they obtained an easy conquest. Being themselves worshippers of light and fire, they gave a corresponding name to their chief strong hold, the situation of which was at the top of the Delta, and not at Pelusium, as many have supposed. Their detestation of the Egyptian idolatry impelled them to destroy the temples, and as far as possible, to abolish the worship of the country ; which severity, by combining against them the hatred of all classes, occasioned at last their entire expulsion.

Note [i.] page 108. *Language of Symbols—Interpretation of dreams.*

The pictorial writing of the Egyptians, which has been so long a mystery to mankind, must have been by no means very easily understood, even by those who were in the daily habit of using it. Whatever number of plants, animals, or other material objects had names commencing with the same vocal sound, so many different figures might be made to represent the same letter ; as in English the figures of a lion, a lynx, a lamb, a lizard, a lark, a lamp, etc. might be used indifferently to represent the sound of the letter *l*, according to the fancy or the taste of the writer. From this much confusion and obscurity must undoubtedly have arisen ; and it permitted at the same time a species of irony or flattery in the selection of the phonetic characters ;—as it would be more complimentary to

a monarch to write *l* in his name as a *lion*, than as a *lamb*. But the more frequent use of certain figures would give them a sort of conventional currency, almost equivalent to appropriation. This would happen much the soonest in writing of a sacred nature, where the figures most generally used would acquire somewhat of a consecrated character, and be regarded themselves with a portion of that veneration due to the deities prefigured. This natural consequence was greatly forwarded by the symbolical meaning frequently, and at length universally, given to certain characters. It is obvious that abstract ideas could not be represented in any other than a symbolical manner in pictorial writing. To paint courage, for instance, is impossible; but by using a lion as the symbol of courage, the idea is indicated by the representation of its symbol. The personal character, or distinctive attributes of every deity was thus symbolized; and certain animals became consecrated to him in a peculiar manner. From this the last declension of ignorance and superstition was easy. The symbol was perverted into a reality; and the animals themselves became the objects of divine honours and worship.

It ought to be taken into consideration also, that the cooler and more calculating minds of Europeans incapacitate them, to a considerable extent, for forming accurate conceptions respecting the manners and feelings of oriental nations. Their lavish use of figurative language is indeed well known; but sufficient attention has scarcely been paid to the manner in which the same spirit pervades every thing oriental. Figurative language is essentially symbolical. But the same excitable temperament which spoke in metaphors went still further, and displayed its meaning by representing it in living symbolic action. In this respect the conduct of the Jews was similar to that of other eastern nations. This observation would serve to explain many seemingly obscure passages, not only in the prophetic, but even in the historic books of Scripture. In the prophecies it abounds, whether the prophet is directed to represent the subject of his prediction before his countrymen, or sees it himself in symbolic vision. It is even employed repeatedly by our Lord himself, and sometimes in a very striking manner, as when He washed the feet of his

disciples, to represent the affectionate humility which becomes a Christian.

To enumerate the various uses of this symbolizing spirit, as it is seen in the Bible, would lead into a discussion of disproportionate length ; but one point is still deserving of notice, however brief. Dreams are almost invariably regarded as symbolical visions ; and the rules of their interpretation proceed at first on the assumption of certain known laws of explaining symbolical language. This knowledge might be communicated, the language of symbols being already ascertained ; hence professional interpreters of dreams. But when the language had been explained the mystery was not always revealed, if the subject transcended the conceptions of the taught interpreters. On this account Joseph and Daniel displayed the superior excellence of divine inspiration, when the common interpreters were struck dumb. The book of Revelations is expressed in the same symbolic language ; so that any attempts to explain it, till the meaning of the symbols has been clearly and systematically elucidated, must be altogether unsuccessful. Much, since the days of Mede, has been done in this interesting department of sacred criticism, but there is still much remaining to be done, and if well and judiciously done, it would be of inestimable value, as a key to all the prophetic writings.

Note [k.] p. 110. *Serpent-Worship—Prophecy of Balaam.*

Perhaps the worship of the serpent should be excluded from among the modes of idolatry introduced into Egypt by the perversion of symbolic characters in public inscriptions. Serpent-worship seems to have been one of the earliest forms of idolatry into which mankind degenerated ; and it certainly became one of the most universal. In Hindostan, and in Scandinavia, and in all climes between these extremes, we find the serpent occupying a prominent position in their mythic fables. In Egypt the serpent was an emblem of sovereignty, worn on the head-dress of the kings, as well as of sacredness, as belonging to the priests. The earliest times and

most imaginative nations, have always been most addicted to serpent-worship ; and it is remarkable that it continued to be retained in those parts of Grecian mythology which were most distinguished by the presence of excitement or mystery,—as the worship of Bacchus, and the celebration of the mysteries. This may be allowed to furnish some corroboration to the idea, that the serpent was used merely as a symbol of the great rebellious and tempting spirit ; though this fatal truth was hid from his deluded votaries by the fabulous aspect which it was made to wear. It may even be admitted, that the tempter was allowed occasionally to assume a visible form, and appear in the shape of a serpent to his worshippers. If we were to trace out the indications of something to that effect, which may be found even in the Bible, it might be possible to bring forth some very curious results, and elucidate some singular perversities of the human mind, both in ancient and modern times.

From almost the earliest ages the dogma was entertained of two spiritual principles, one good the other evil, one light the other darkness, one beloved the other feared, but both worshipped. It sometimes happened, however, that the evil principle was not only recognized as co-equal and co-eternal with the good principle, but had even the address to procure an exchange of character, and to be regarded as the benevolent spirit, receiving as such divine honours. It might be possible to produce parallel sentiments from modern writings, in which Satan is represented as a highly honourable, but very ill-used personage, suffering only because he had been worsted by a more powerful antagonist. If such notions can be still entertained, set forth, and obtain a certain degree of currency, it is not surprising, that the same subtle spirit, to whose agency on men's minds it must be attributed, was able to corrupt and deceive the nations of remote antiquity.

Serpent-worship had begun in the days of Job, as we may learn from his explicit declaration, that the crooked serpent also had been formed by the hand of God, and was consequently inferior. It may be added, that oracular responses and serpent-worship seem to have been in some manner connected from the earliest times. To this there is, perhaps, an

allusion in the story of Balaam. "When he saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments;" literally, "to the meeting of Nachashim,"—or serpents. When Moses denounces diviners, consultants with familiar spirits, &c., the words used to designate the offence point out its nature;—they are consultants of Ob, that is, the Ophite, or serpent-deity. The witch of Endor is also called an Aub, or consulter of the same serpent-gods. Such was the success with which the guile of the Old Serpent continued to work its envenomed way in the heart of deluded man.

Note [l.] p. 135. *The Worship of Fire.*

The attempts to account for the origin of evil by the hypothesis of two principles, co-eternal, but of opposite essences, the one good the other evil, symbolically termed *light* and *darkness*, gave rise to the earliest form of idolatry. From the symbolical name to the symbol was a natural and an easy descent. But the great abode of light seemed to be the sun, and the material symbol of the sun was fire; and thus from the metaphysical speculation on the origin of evil sprung, by the perversity of fallen human nature, the worship of the sun, and thence of fire itself. Throughout almost all the east, this species of idolatry prevailed in the most ancient times; and the sun was worshipped under the name of Baal, or Bel, fire being the material symbol, and often the object of worship. But to propitiate such a deity nothing could be considered so suitable as burnt-offerings; and since the nobler the victim the more excellent the sacrifice, it was soon regarded as peculiarly pleasing to the dreadful god to be regaled by the immolation of human beings. To this horrible fact all antiquity, sacred and profane, bears witness. The land of Babylonia seems to have been the scene of its earliest establishment. It soon extended its baleful influence in all directions, to corrupt and to destroy. It prevailed in India; and the Suttees of the wretched Hindoo widows may be considered as a relic of the worship of Baal. The Egyptians had sunk into an idolatrous worship of their own before that of

F f

Baal became known to them ; and as it was introduced by their oppressors the Hyksos, it met with little favour, and almost disappeared upon the expulsion of these fierce wanderers. The Phœnicians adopted it readily ; and their chief deity, called by the Greeks the Tyrian Hercules, was merely a Baal, worshipped with some national peculiarities. Even the Israelites were continually falling into that seductive idolatry, or "halting between two opinions, whether Baal or Jehovah were God."

The nations of northern Europe received the same idolatry ; and the celebrated druids were priests of Baal. This is evident from the remains of their superstitious notions and ceremonies, which still exist among those Celtic nations, whose individuality of race has been little disturbed by the intermingling of foreigners. In Wales, Scotland, particularly the Highlands, and Ireland, both the name and the rites of Baal may still be found. Beltane, Beal-tein, Beal-fire, and such terms speak their own origin. The ceremonies formerly observed on Beltane, or the first of May, were not less significant of the source whence they had sprung. A large fire was made, and every member of the family or neighbouring community made to pass through its live embers, by way of consecrating them from peril throughout the year ; and the rite was extended also to their flocks and herds. As civilization increased the rite was modified. The fire was still made ; but a cake was baked of certain determinate ingredients, viz. eggs, oatmeal, and butter or milk ; and this cake was divided into the requisite number of portions, and each individual threw his part into the fire, as a propitiatory sacrifice, for protection through the following year. This ceremony is rapidly falling into disuse everywhere, and cannot too soon be abandoned entirely. Still it is curious, both as a proof of the general prevalence of fire-worship throughout the world, and as another instance of that connection which has been thought to have existed in very remote ages between the races of mankind that peopled India, Persia, and northern Europe. This, however, is a subject more within the province of the professed philologist, or antiquarian, and to them we leave it.

It should be remarked, that the worship of fire, and that of the serpent, are almost invariably united ; especially in ancient times, and the more ancient the more intimately are they blended, till they seem to meet in some primitive symbol, or misunderstood tradition ;—and what could such tradition be but a confused account of the temptation and fall of man, in which the chief agent was at once a serpent, and a being of celestial origin and nature ?—and fallen man proved the depth of his degradation by hating his Preserver and worshipping his Destroyer.

Note [m.] page 150. *Assyrian and Babylonian Dynasties.*

Setting aside the fables of Belus, Ninus, and Semiramis, with their thirty nameless successors ; and transferring the story of Sardanapalus to its true position, as the final catastrophe of the Assyrian empire, the sovereigns of that imperial city, Nineveh, of whom we have any knowledge, are the following :

| NAMES. | Before Christ. | Years of their reign. |
|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| Pul | 774 | 21 |
| Tiglath-Pileser | 753 | 19 |
| Shalmaneser | 734 | 14 |
| Sennacherib | 720 | 7 |
| Esarhaddon | 713 | 35 |
| Sardochæus | 678 | 20 |
| Chyniladan | 658 | 22 |
| Sarachus | 636 | 13 |
| End of the Empire ... | 623 | — |
| Total duration of the Assyrian empire | | 151 |

The flourishing period of this empire was from Pul to Sennacherib, the destruction of whose veteran army, by Divine vengeance gave it a fatal blow. Under Esarhaddon it was partially recovered by the valour of its mercenary troops, the Chaldeans ; but their revolt in the reign of Sarachus, the true Sardanapalus, reduced it to total ruin, from which, having lost by its degeneracy the means of self-sup-

port, restoration was no longer possible, and the seat of empire was removed to Babylon.

The blending of the Assyrian and Babylonian monarchies will be easily seen by a glance at the following table, taken chiefly from the canon of Ptolemy.

| NAMES. | Before Christ. | Reign. |
|---|----------------|-------------|
| Nabonassar | 747 | 14 |
| Nadius | 733 | 2 |
| Chinzirus, or Porus | 731 | 5 |
| Jugæus | 726 | 5 |
| Mardoch-empadus (Merodach-baladan) | 721 | 12 |
| Arkianus | 709 | 5 |
| <i>Interregnum</i> | 704 | 2 |
| Belibus | 702 | 3 |
| Apronadius | 699 | 6 |
| Rigebelus | 693 | 1 |
| Messomordacus | 692 | 4 |
| <i>Interregnum</i> | 688 | 8 |
| Esarhaddon (King of Assyria) | 680 | 13 |
| Sardochæus (King of Assyria) | 667 | 20 |
| Chyniladan (King of Assyria) | 647 | 22 |
| Nabopolassar, the Chaldean | 625 | 20 |
| Nabocholassar (Nebuchadnezzar) | 605 | 43 |
| Iluarodamus (Evil-merodach) | 562 | 2 |
| Nirichossolassar (Neriglissor) | 560 | 4 |
| Laborasoarchad | 556 ... | nine months |
| Nabonadius, or Labynetus (Belshazzar) | 556 | 17 |
| End of the Babylonian empire | 539 | |

It will be perceived that a period of short reigns, and probably great confusion, intervened between the revolt of Merodach-baladan and the reign of Esarhaddon, who again annexed the rebellious province of Babylon to the empire of Assyria. Nabopolassar, the Chaldean, revolted against Sarrachus, and in conjunction with the Medes, took and utterly destroyed Nineveh. From that time the Babylonian was the sovereign empire, till it was overthrown by Cyrus, and the seat of power transferred to Persia. If the duration of the

Babylonian empire be computed from the reign of Nabonassar, as some do, it will amount to 208 years ; but if from the fall of Nineveh, not more than 84, of which the last 23 were distinguished for nothing but the rapid progress of luxury and degeneracy. Indeed the conquering period of that empire was almost wholly included within the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, so truly was he the "golden head" of the prophetic image.

Note [n.] page 155. *The Ten Tribes.*

It has long been an object of curious and interesting inquiry into what country the Ten Tribes were carried by Shalmaneser ; and what finally became of them. If the places to which they were carried can be identified, some progress towards the solution of the difficulty will be made. They were transferred, according to the Bible "To Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and the river of Gozan." Cities may perish, but the river will have continued. Now there is in the north of Persia, viz. in Curdistan, or what was called upper Media in ancient times, a river still called Kizil Ozan, or simply Ozan, —Kizil being an appellative term having reference to the colour of its waters. For this we have the testimony of Morier, whose accuracy cannot be questioned. Certain cities also in the neighbourhood have names very similar to those given in the Bible, allowance being made for the absence or transposition of aspirates ; as Chalcal, and Abhor, for Halah and Habor. Again, this district bordering closely on Media, and Media being at that time tributary to Assyria, the dispersion of the Israelites among the cities of the Medes, after peopling the district of Gozan, was practicable and even natural. The plain of Rages, in the vicinity of Ecbatana, was also the residence of many ; and from the word Cuthah we may fairly infer, that some portion of them were sent to the district of Babylonia.

All this seems perfectly conclusive against the idea that they were transported to some eastern region so remote, as to disappear from the view of historians, and yet to have a local habitation appropriated exclusively to themselves. The very

idea, that a nation could be lost, seems sufficiently extravagant ; and if we can prove that the places to which they were carried captive, were on the borders of the Caspian sea, or in Central Media, or on the Euphrates, it will be evident, that remaining thus in the very centre of the arena in which empires disputed for universal dominion, they could not possibly continue to exist in a body, and yet elude the observation, and even the diligent researches of historians. The similarity of the names already specified is very remarkable ; and when to this it is added, that it can be proved, that the Assyrians never at any time possessed more than a nominal authority over the Medes, consequently had no access to the regions of the remote east beyond Media, it will be clear, that the Ten Tribes could not have been carried away beyond the reach of even very slight inquiries. Yet they seem to have disappeared completely, to the astonishment of very many, who would entertain hopes of discovering them still somewhere in Asia. It is not likely that there is enough of any part of Asia still unexplored in which a nation might hide itself, unknown to even its neighbours. Neither does there appear to be any reason why the Ten idolatrous Tribes should be miraculously preserved, after having renounced the worship of Jehovah, by which they had been distinguished. The tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi were sufficient for that purpose ; and their continued existence in their scattered condition, is certainly a permanent miracle. Religion is the alone conservative principle of a nation. The Jews are still, as formerly, different from all the world in their religious belief ; therefore they remain apart and distinct from all mankind. But the apostate Ten having lost that distinctive characteristic, may be fairly supposed to have become undistinguishably blended with the Asiatic nations among whom they were dispersed. Some, very probably, of every tribe accompanied those of their countrymen who returned after the Babylonish captivity ; and all who tarried became thereby finally apostate, and ceased to retain any distinct and separate existence. Indeed the idea that some of all the tribes had returned with Ezra and Nehemiah, and combined to form the kingdom of Judea seems to be proved by the language of the

Apostle James, who addresses his epistle "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad;" and as his epistle was written to the Christians converted from Judaism, it follows that there were some of every tribe among the converts, consequently that the Ten had not then been lost in a body, and our acquaintance with the history of nations since that time is too accurate to permit the possibility of such an event having since occurred.

An opinion has been entertained and advocated, that the native Americans are the descendants of the Ten Tribes; and some very curious coincidences in language, customs, and religious rites with those of the Jews have been pointed out as corroborations of the opinion. We feel somewhat reluctant to dispel the pleasing idea. But it might be shown that the continent of America must have been peopled long before the time when the Ten Tribes were carried away by Shalmaneser. Recent travels have made us acquainted with ruins of cities scarcely, if at all, less ancient than those of Nineveh and Babylon, in the empire of Mexico; and it is more than probable that Mexico was by no means the first part of the American continent that was inhabited. The similarities that have been observed between the native Americans and the Jews may be easily accounted for, by supposing that America was peopled by a colony from Asia, by the straits of Kamtschatka, in the Patriarchal age, when the manners, language, and religious belief of all mankind were the same, equally simple and uncorrupted. What was pure in the patriarchal notions was retained in the Mosaic; while the American colony being disjoined from all the world retained the greater part of their primitive character and creed, and consequently retained a portion of what being patriarchal was common to them and the Jews. This is, no doubt, a hypothetical solution; but it seems more probable than that which would discover in the forests of America the genuine descendants of the long lost, the apostate Ten Tribes of Israel.

Note [o.] page 190. *Persian Dynasty.*

As all ancient history agrees in representing the Median kingdom as more powerful originally than that of Persia, into which it finally merged, a brief glance at the history of the Medes may not be without the interest, and at the same time serve to introduce the enumeration of the monarchs of the great Persian dynasty.

Arbaces is generally termed the first king of the Medes ; but as the only mention made of him is in connection with the fabulous statements respecting Sardanapalus, and a silence of above seventy years follows, we may without much hesitation reject the whole as destitute of any sure foundation. There may be some truth in the account of the manner in which Dejoces is said to have obtained the supremacy over the other chiefs of tribes, about 728, B. C. His successor Phraortes is said to have fallen in battle against the Assyrians, at that time still the predominant power in Asia, though verging towards their decline. He was succeeded by Cyaxares I. about 643, B. C. This monarch formed a confederacy with Nabopolassar, the Chaldean viceroy of Babylon, and their joint forces overthrew Nineveh and put an end to the Assyrian empire. While the Chaldeo-Babylonian kings continued their conquering career over Western Asia peace remained unbroken between them and Media, during the respective reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Astyages, from 603 till 539. Under the reign of Cyaxares II. hostilities broke out, and Cyrus at the head of the Persians, came to the aid of his maternal uncle, the king of Media. After the death of Cyaxares both kingdoms were united under the command of Cyrus, who thus became the founder of the Persian empire.

According to Ptolemey the kings of the Persian monarchy were ten ; but as he omits those who reigned less than a year, which was repeatedly the case, the actual number was thirteen, or if we include the two years during which Cyrus acted as general under his uncle, and enumerate Cyaxares, fourteen.

| NAMES. | Before Christ. | Reign. |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Cyaxares II. | 538 | 2 |
| Cyrus | 536 | 7 |
| Cambyses | 529 | 7 and 5 months |
| Smerdis | 522 | 7 months |
| Darius Hystaspes | 521 | 36 |
| Xerxes I. | 485 | 21 |
| Artaxerxes Longimanus | 464 | 40 and 3 months |
| Xerxes II. | 424 | 2 months |
| Sogdianus | 424 | 7 months |
| Darius Nothus | 423 | 19 |
| Artaxerxes Mnemon | 404 | 46 |
| Darius Ochus | 358 | 21 |
| Arses | 337 | 2 |
| Darius Codomanus | 335 | 4 |

The flourishing period of the monarchy was from the time of Cyrus till the expedition of Xerxes against Greece. It then began to manifest symptoms of decay ; and after suffering the weakening effects of insurrections, intrigues, and all the evils of misgovernment, was at length completely subdued by Alexander the Great, B. C. 331.

Note [p.] page 256. *Macedonian Dynasties.*

The splendid career of Alexander the Great, brilliant as the path of a comet, and as brief, was productive of lasting consequences throughout the greater part of the civilized world. It gave to the effeminate Asiatics a series of monarchs of decided abilities; infused into them a strong portion of Grecian blood; and taught them the advantages of more regularly constituted governments, had they been capable of profiting by the lesson. It ought to be observed, that the absolute success of any measure is not a fair criterion of its merits. The Grecian conquest could not renovate Asia, because its soul was dead; but it furnished an excellent opportunity for its renovation. Its internal principles were all corrupt to the most intense degree, and no external influence could avail to

reorganize it, and give it new life. Its contamination proved gradually fatal to its new lords; and while the veteran warriors of Alexander died out, their sons were not reluctant to assume the luxurious and effeminate habits of their voluptuous subjects. By the time that the Romans had extended their conquests to the east the successors of Alexander had degenerated into the most perfect similarity to the native Asiatics; to which was superadded enough remains of the Greek intellect to enable them to excel in selfishness, craft, and perfidy. They were thus ripe for destruction; and in a short time their destruction was complete.

Of the successors of Alexander, who prolonged the Greco-Macedonian name and dynasties, the most important were those who ruled in Syria, and Egypt. A list of the kings of those two dynasties may not be unacceptable.

| GRECO-ASSYRIAN. | | GRECO-EGYPTIAN | |
|---------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| | B. C. | | B. C. |
| Seleucus Nicator | 312 | Ptolemey Lagus | 323 |
| Antiochus Soter | 280 | Ptolemey Philadelphus .. | 284 |
| Antiochus Theos | 260 | Ptolemey Evergetes | 246 |
| Seleucus Callinicus | 245 | Ptolemey Philopator ... | 221 |
| Seleucus Ceraunus | 225 | Ptolemey Epiphanes ... | 264 |
| Antiochus the Great | 223 | Ptolemey Philometor ... | 180 |
| Seleucus Philopator | 186 | Ptolemey Physcon | 145 |
| Antiochus Epiphanes ... | 175 | Ptolemey Lathyrus | 116 |
| Antiochus Eupator | 164 | Ptolemey Alexander | 80 |
| Demetrius Soter | 162 | Ptolemey Auletes | 65 |
| Alexander Balas | 150 | Cleopatra | 51 |
| Demetrius Nicator | 145 | The Romans | 83 |
| Antiochus Sidetes | 140 | | |
| Demetrius Nicator II. ... | 130 | | |
| Zebina | 125 | | |
| Antiochus Grypus | 123 | | |
| Seleucus | 96 | | |
| Philip | 92 | | |
| Tigranes | 83 | | |
| The Romans | 66 | | |

Note [q.] page 267. *Testimony of the Grecian philosophers to the necessity of a revelation.*

After the philosophy of Greece had enabled its followers to detect the superstitious absurdities of the national religion, it naturally became a question among all the chief philosophers what to substitute in the place of the exploded creed. Some of vain or licentious dispositions were glad to escape from all sense of restraint, and disavowed every religion alike, betaking themselves to the shadowy regions of scepticism. Others of nobler nature and wiser minds made it a subject of careful study and earnest inquiry; but found it impossible to arrive at any fixed principles, or sure knowledge, on which a new religious system might be founded. Of these candid inquirers Socrates was by far the most distinguished for clearness of intellect and integrity of character. His sentiments are known to us chiefly by the writings of his two scholars Xenophon and Plato; and as the latter occupies no secondary elevation as a philosopher, gained by his own merits, his statements deserve the more attention. Now nothing can be more explicit than the testimony which those two eminent men bear to the necessity of a revelation. In the second Alcibiades there is a very remarkable passage :—

ΣΩΚ. Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν δοκεῖ κράτιστον εἶναι ἡσυχίαν ἔχειν. τῇ μὲν γὰρ Λακεδαιμονίων εὐχῇ, διὰ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν (τοῦτο γὰρ κάλλιστον τῶν ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ γε ὀνομάτων) οὐκ ἂν οἰμαί σε ἐξέλαιν χρῆσθαι. ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἐστὶ περιμένειν ἕως ἂν τις μάθῃ ὡς δεῖ πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους διακεῖσθαι. ΑΛ. Πότε οὖν παρέσται ὁ χρόνος οὗτος, ὃ Σώκρατες; καὶ τίς ὁ παιδεύσων; ἡδίστα γὰρ ἂν μοι δοκῶ ιδεῖν τοῦτον τὸν ἀνθρώπον τίς ἐστι. ΣΩ. Οὗτός ἐστιν ὃς μέλει περὶ σοῦ. ἀλλὰ δοκεῖ μοι, ὥσπερ τῷ Διομήδει φησὶ τὴν Ἀθηναῖν Ὅμηρος ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀφελεῖν τὴν ἀχλὺν, Ὅφρ' εὖ γιγνώσκω ἡμῖν θεὸν ἡδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα, οὕτω καὶ σοῦ δεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πρῶτον ἀφελόντα τὴν ἀχλὺν, ἥ νῦν παρούσα τυγχάνει, τοσηναυτ' ἥδη προσφέρειν δι' ὧν μέλλεις γινώσκεισθαι ἡμῖν κακὸν ἡδὲ καὶ ἰσθλόν. νῦν μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν μοι δοκῆς δυνηθῆναι. ΑΛ. Ἀφαιρείτω, εἴτε βούλεται, τὴν ἀχλὺν, εἰ ἄλλό τι. ὡς ἐγὼ παρεσκεύασμαι μηδὲν ἂν φεύγειν τῶν ὑπ' ἐκείνου προσταττομένων, ὅστις ποτ' ἐστὶν ὁ ἀνθρώπος; εἶγε μέλλοιμι βελτίων γενέσθαι. ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ μὴν ἐκείνους θανμαστήν ὄσων

περί σε προθυμίαν ἔχει. ΑΛ. Εἰς τότε τοῖνυν καὶ τὴν θυσίαν ἀναβαλλέσθαι κράτιστον εἶναι μοι δοκεῖ. ΣΩ. Καὶ ὁρῶς γε σοὶ δοκεῖ. ἀσφαλέστερον γὰρ ἐστὶν ἢ παρακινδυνεύειν τοσοῦτον κινδυνόν. ΑΛ.—τοῖς θεοῖς δὲ καὶ στεφάνους καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα τὰ νομιζόμενα τότε δώσομεν, ὅταν ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν ἰλθοῦσαν ἴδω. ἤξει δ' οὐ διὰ μακροῦ, τούτων δελόντων.

“*Socrates.* It seems best to me to maintain a tranquil expectation ; indeed it is absolutely necessary for us to wait, until we may learn how we ought to conduct ourselves both towards God, and towards men. *Alcibiades.* When will that time come, O Socrates ? And who is that teacher ? For methinks I would gladly see this person who he is. *Soc.* It is one who even now has a regard for you. But as Homer says, that Minerva took away the mist from the eyes of Diomed, that he might be able to distinguish a deity from a human being : so from the eye of your mind must first be taken away that mist which now bedims it ; then indeed will you be able to discriminate as you desire between good and evil ; for at present in my opinion you cannot. *Alc.* Let him take away, if he pleases, this mist, or whatever it be ; for I am prepared to shun none of his directions, be who he may, if I may thereby become a good man. *Soc.* Assuredly that person entertains a wonderful predilection in your favour. *Alc.* It will be best then to abstain from sacrificing for the present, in my opinion. *Soc.* And your opinion is quite correct ; it will be a safer course, than to incur such a hazard (as offering sacrifices of very doubtful acceptableness.) *Al.* We shall present to the gods garlands, and all other appointed offerings then, when I may behold the arrival of that day ; and it will come at no distant date, if it be their pleasure.”

In the *Phaedo* we find the following wise yet melancholy sentiment.

Δεῖν γὰρ περὶ αὐτὰ ἔν γέ τι τούτων διαπράσασθαι. ἢ μαθεῖν ὅπῃ ἔχει ἢ εὐρεῖν, ἢ, εἰ ταῦτα ἀδύνατον, τὸν γοῦν βέλτιστον τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων λόγων λαβόντα καὶ δυσσελεγκτότατον ἐπὶ τούτου ὀχουμενον ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σχεδίας, κινδυνεύοντα διαπλεῦσαι τὸν βίον· εἰ μὴ τις δύναιτο ἀσφαλέστερον καὶ ἀκινδυνότερον ἐπὶ βεβαιωτέρου δόχματος, ἢ λόγου θείου τινός, διαπορευθῆναι.

“We ought therefore by all means to do one of these

things,—either to learn or find out in what manner essential truth exists; or if that be impossible, taking the best and least impeachable of human reasonings, embark on that, as on a frail skiff, and so navigate the perilous ocean of life: unless indeed one could perform that voyage less exposed to difficulties and dangers, by means of some safer conveyance, such as a divine revelation would be.”

In the *Timaeus* Plato says :

Τόν ἤν οὖν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὐρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὐρόντα, εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν.

“It is a difficult matter to find out the Maker and Parent of the universe, and when you have found Him out, to declare Him to all is impossible.”

Perhaps the most remarkable passage in all the writings of the Greek philosophers is that in which Plato describes the imagined character of a just and virtuous person, supposes the trials he would have to undergo in proof of his sincerity, and states the result.

Τοῦτον δὲ τοιοῦτον ξέντες, τὸν δίκαιον παρ’ αὐτὸν ἰστώμεν τῷ λόγῳ, ἄνδρα ἀπλοῦν καὶ γενναῖον, κατ’ Αἰσχύλον, οὐ δοκεῖν ἀλλ’ εἶναι ἀγαθὸν ἐθέλοντα. ἀφαιρετέον δὴ τὸ δοκεῖν. εἰ γὰρ δόξει δίκαιος εἶναι, ἔσονται αὐτῷ τιμαὶ καὶ δωρεαί, δοκοῦντι τοιούτῳ εἶναι. ἄδηλον οὖν εἶτε τοῦ δικαίου, εἶτε τῶν δωρεῶν τε καὶ τιμῶν ἕνεκα, τοιοῦτος εἴη, γυμνωτός δὴ πάντων, πλήν δικαιοσύνης, καὶ ποιητέος ἐναντίως διακείμενος τῷ προτέρῳ. μηδὲν γὰρ ἀδικῶν, δόξαν ἔχεν τὴν μεγίστην ἀδικίας· ἢν’ ἢ βεβασανισμένος εἰς δικαιοσύνην, τῷ μὴ τέγγεσθαι ὑπὸ κακοδοξίας, καὶ τῶν ὑπ’ αὐτῆς γιγνομένων. ἀλλ’ ἦτω ἀμετάστατος μέχρι θανάτου· δοκῶν μὲν εἶναι ἀδικος διὰ βίου, ὦν δὲ δίκαιος.—ἐροῦσι δὲ τάδε. ὅτι οὕτω διακείμενος ὁ δίκαιος μαστιγώσεται, στρεβλώσεται, δεδήσεται, ἱκκαυθήσεται τῷ φθαλμῷ. τελευτῶν, πάντα κακὰ παθὼν, ἀνασχινδιλευθήσεται.—De Republ. Lib. II.

“Taking then this (unjust) person thus described, let us place beside him in our reason, a just person, a man of simple yet generous character, exposed to contumely, and desirous, as *Æschylus* says, rather to be good than to seem so. His good character, however, must be taken away; because if he have the reputation of being a just person, he will obtain honours and rewards on that account, and then it will not be clear whether he cultivate virtue for its own sake, or for its honours

and rewards. He must be stript therefore of every thing except his integrity ; and being regarded as prone to injustice, while his actions are guiltless, he shall bear the stigma of extreme wickedness. Thus he shall be severely tried for proof of his righteousness, unshaken by opprobrium, and all its consequences, but remaining immoveable till death.—Finally, calumniated throughout a life of probity, this just person, thus situated, shall be scourged, tortured, bound, deprived of his eyes, and at length, having suffered all manner of cruel treatment, he shall be crucified.”

Too much has undoubtedly been made of this passage, when it was represented as almost a prophecy of our Lord ; for it is obvious that Plato's intention was merely to delineate the most disinterested virtue, bearing unshaken the severest trials. The very supposition, however, that in this world the most perfect innocence might be exposed to the greatest sufferings, is of some value, as containing a tacit admission, that this life is a period of probation, and the world in general a scene of injustice and wickedness. We have thus, both expressly, and by implication, from the chief Grecian philosophers, a full acknowledgment of the necessity and the value of a divine revelation, to teach blind and guilty man his duty to himself, his neighbour, and his God.

Note [r.] page 334. *General expectation of some mighty Ruler.*

It might not be easy, or rather not possible, to explain in what manner the general expectation of some mighty Ruler about to make his appearance in Judea, had arisen and obtained such universal currency ; unless in consequence of the extensive promulgation of those Hebrew prophecies which predicted the coming of the Messiah. This, indeed, we are persuaded is the true explanation of the fact that such an expectation was widely prevalent. It may be expedient to adduce one or two leading authorities to prove that it was universally entertained.

The entire Pollio of Virgil is founded upon that expectation ; and presents a combined view of the current traditions.

It is thus expressed by Tacitus, with his usual force and brevity: "Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judea rerum potirentur." "There was a rooted persuasion in the minds of very many, that it was contained in the ancient writings of the priests, that at that very time the East should prevail, and that some who should come out of Judea should obtain universal dominion."

The language of Suetonius is very similar, as if both had been taken from some common origin. "Percrebuerat Oriente toto constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judea profecti rerum potirentur." "There had spread a constant belief throughout the whole East, that it was in the fates (was destined) that at that time some who should come out of Judea should obtain universal dominion."

How different the dominion actually obtained from that which they expected or feared! They looked for a mighty conqueror, they marked not the commencing reign of THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

Note [s.] page 343. *Expectation of the Messiah, by the Jews.*

If the Gentiles looked with apprehension for the appearance of a mighty conqueror, or ruler, to come from Judea, the Jews entertained the same expectation, which elated and filled their minds with ambitious hopes. Both Tacitus and Suetonius, in the passages already quoted, ascribe the rebellion and fierce obstinacy of the Jews to that general expectation, appropriated by them to one of their own nation, but ascribed to Vespasian by the Romans, and even by Josephus. "Quæ ambages," continues Tacitus, "Vespasianum et Titum predixerunt. Sed vulgus, more humanæ cupidinis, sibi tantum factorum magnitudinem interpretati, ne adversis quidem ad vera mutabantur." "Which ambiguities foretold Vespasian and Titus. But the common people, according to the usual influence of human desires, having by their interpretation appropriated to themselves so much grandeur of destiny,

could not be induced even by adversity to change their opinion for the truth."

The language of Josephus is very explicit. "That which chiefly excited them (the Jews) to war was an ambiguous prophecy, which was also found in the sacred books, that at that time some one within their country should arise, who should obtain the empire of the habitable world. This they received as belonging peculiarly to themselves; and many of the wise men were deceived by this interpretation. But in truth Vespasian's empire was intended by this prophecy, who was proclaimed emperor in Judea." There is another passage of similar import in the Jewish antiquities of Josephus; and the Apocryphal book of Maccabees, as also the Targum of Onkelos make distinct reference to the same general and strong expectation. True, they had formed very erroneous notions respecting the Messiah, and looked for a temporal prince, a mighty conqueror, who should break the yoke of Rome, and not only secure independence to the nation, but also raise it to universal sovereignty. These extravagant ideas, however, while they show the vanity, presumption, and wilful blindness of the Jews, afford abundant testimony of their belief that the coming of the Messiah was then at hand, and that is all we wish to prove. Both Jews and Heathens had sufficient warning to make them aware of the dread importance of the near-impending crisis; both perverted the spirit of the warning prediction, and seeing they saw not, so as to understand its fulfilment. The Romans, in their dread of a rival conqueror, overlooked the mild majesty of the PRINCE OF PEACE; the Hebrews, elated with the visionary triumphs of the coming Lion of Judah, beheld with scorn the gentle bearing of THE LAMB OF GOD. Thus the foolish heart of man was darkened, so that when "The Desire of all nations" came, they knew Him not; and obeying the dictates of their own ignorant self-sufficiency they slew their SAVIOUR, calling down upon their own heads and those of their children at the same time the vengeance due to the shedding of innocent blood. But even this was the pre-determinate counsel of the Omniscient; and the blood then shed was the blood of atonement, to wash away the sins of the world, and by one pro-

pitiatory sacrifice of infinite value to secure for ever to man the favour of his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, his merciful and gracious God. Certainly then the hour in which this great achievement was wrought, was indeed **THE FULLNESS OF TIME**, and contained within it the essence of the blessedness and the glories of whole Eternity.

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

Without arrogating any peculiar importance to his opinions, the author thinks it right to mention explicitly, though briefly, what are his views respecting the connection between Church and State, in order, if possible, to avoid being either misunderstood or misrepresented.

It is the primary duty of every rational being to examine sincerely and candidly the credentials of what assumes the character of a divine revelation ; and to embrace it, if these credentials furnish satisfactory evidence. Such is the character of Christianity ; and we do not believe that ever any person did examine its evidences in a right spirit, without being thoroughly convinced, and becoming a Christian. It is therefore the duty of every man to be a Christian. Again, it is the duty of every Christian to use his utmost endeavour, according to his abilities and opportunities, to extend the knowledge of the Gospel, and thereby to enlarge the kingdom of the Redeemer. It is therefore the duty of every king, statesman, or civic ruler of whatever station, to be a Christian ; and as such, to do the utmost in his power, according to his abilities and opportunities, to promote the extension of Christianity. Indeed the whole tenor of the preceding work goes to prove, that true religion is the only principle by which the prosperity and happiness of nations can be secured. Accordingly it must follow, that it is even the primary duty of a wise and right-minded government to use the most efficient means in its power for promoting the interests of true religion,—the religion of the Bible. And as the mass of mankind are

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perishing for lack of sacred knowledge, and blindly ignorant of either their danger, or the gracious remedy which God has provided, they must be instructed, even before they manifest any inclination for such instruction. The government cannot leave them to perish without violating its primary and most imperative duty ; and how it can accomplish that duty without providing a suitable maintenance for men who devote themselves to the office of religious instructors, it would not be easy to show.

The abstract question,—whether a government ought to levy from a people funds for the support of a religion not held by that people, even though it were the true religion,—is one which we are not called upon to discuss ; seeing that by the private bequests of individuals throughout the nation, during a long succession of ages, ample means have been already set apart for sacred uses totally irrespective of any act of government, and which the State is bound to protect according to its original destination, in the same manner as any other bequeathed property. Any alienation of this property, including lay-impropriation, is decidedly illegal ; though without it the Church may exist as an organized and national Church. Those who exclaim against establishments as a violence done to their conscience, seem to forget that a king and a State have also a conscience, by which they are bound to support and extend religion for the good of the people.

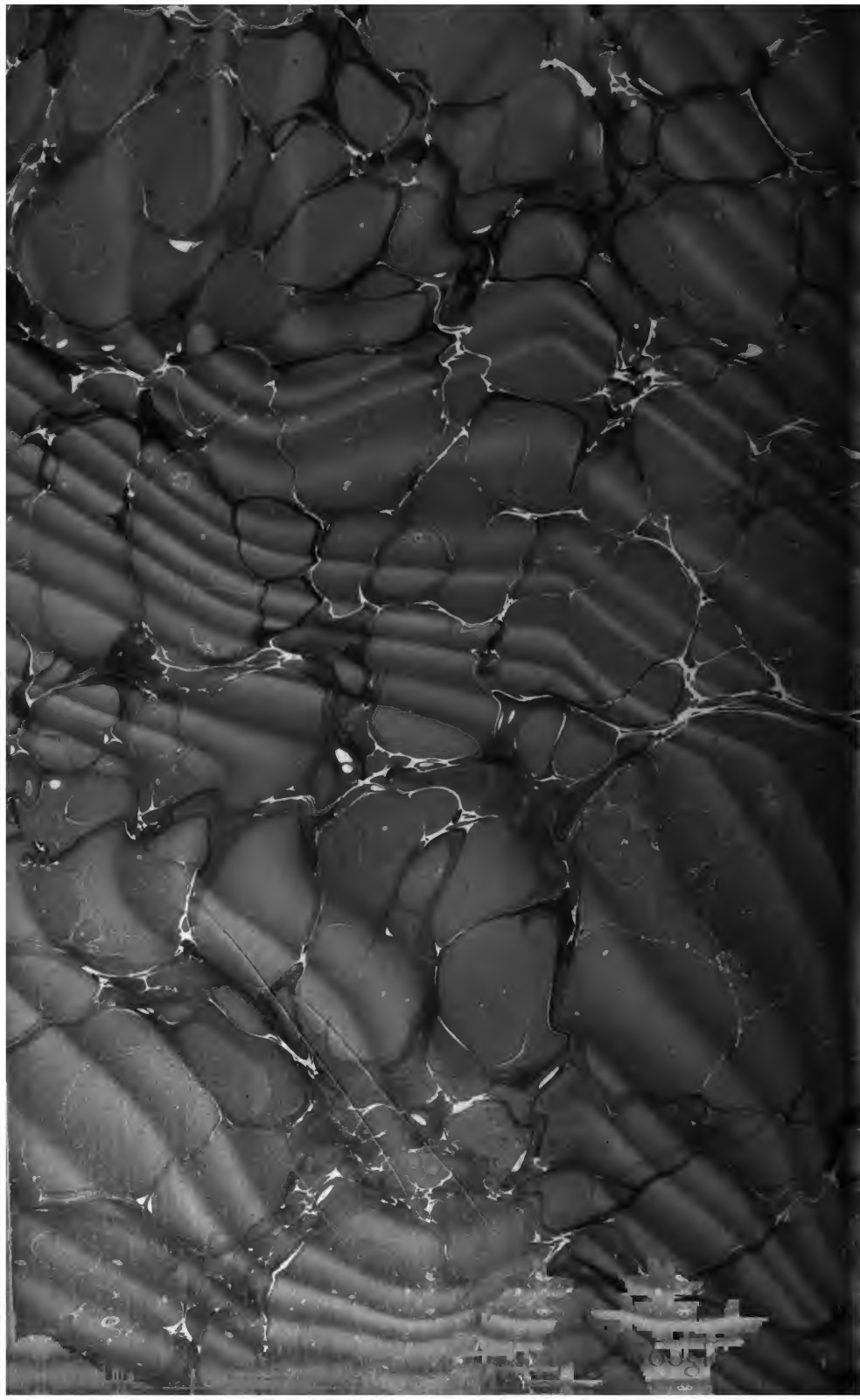
It seems, then, to be demonstrably evident, that a government cannot discharge its primary duty to the people, without providing sufficient means for giving religious instruction to the community at large. This is the principle of an establishment, so far as the state is concerned, in its purity. But if the State attempt to tamper with the spiritual government of the Church, or to use it as a mere political engine,—these are abuses of the principle, and ought not to be tolerated. On the other hand, if the Church interfere with the political functions of the State, and usurp a power in merely temporal concerns, she also has stepped beyond her province, and ought for her own sake, to be restrained from such improper interference. It may, indeed, be the duty of a Christian Pastor to reprove such of the officers of State as are members of his

flock, when they introduce or support measures decidedly at variance with Christian principles and conduct ; but this may be done without his making the slightest approach to the character of a political partisan. How beautiful would be the spectacle of a whole nation animated with the pure spirit of genuine Christianity !—Rulers, Pastors, and People, all according to their degrees and functions, engaged in promoting the glory of God, and the welfare of man, by filling the land with the knowledge and the fruits of the everlasting Gospel of Peace ! Such a spectacle, or nearly such, was once seen in Scotland, during the best days of her national Church. Let but that Church be restored to her pristine purity and freedom, and we may yet hope to see those days renewed, and Scotland again honoured in being chosen to display to the world the true solution of that important problem, the right moral and religious connection between Church and State, by exhibiting the harmonious and hallowed union of civil and religious liberty.

ERRATUM.

Page 374, line 11 from the bottom, for *foundation* read *fountain*.

FINIS.



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